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25 YEARS OF RECORDED HISTORY

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#59 SUMMER 1998

Backstreets

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THE BOSS MAGAZINE

1976

1977

1978

Into the
Darkness

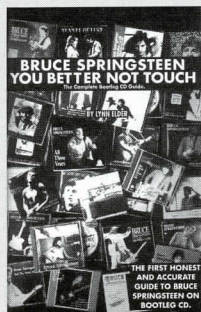
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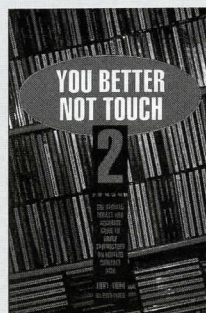
YOU BETTER NOT TOUCH The guide to Boss bootlegs on compact disc

You Better Not Touch is *Backstreets* reviewer Lynn Elder's series of guides to the bootleg CDs of Bruce Springsteen. With Volume 3, the YBNT series now covers Boss boots from the first release through 1997. Thorough, honest, and well-illustrated, these guides provide ratings for sound, packaging and performance. For each title YBNT also offers an overall star rating; show and source information; exhaustive comments and more. Each title is pictured so you'll know what to look for—or what to avoid! With Volumes 1, 2 and 3, you'll have exhaustive advice on virtually every Boss boot to date and a resource no collector should be without.



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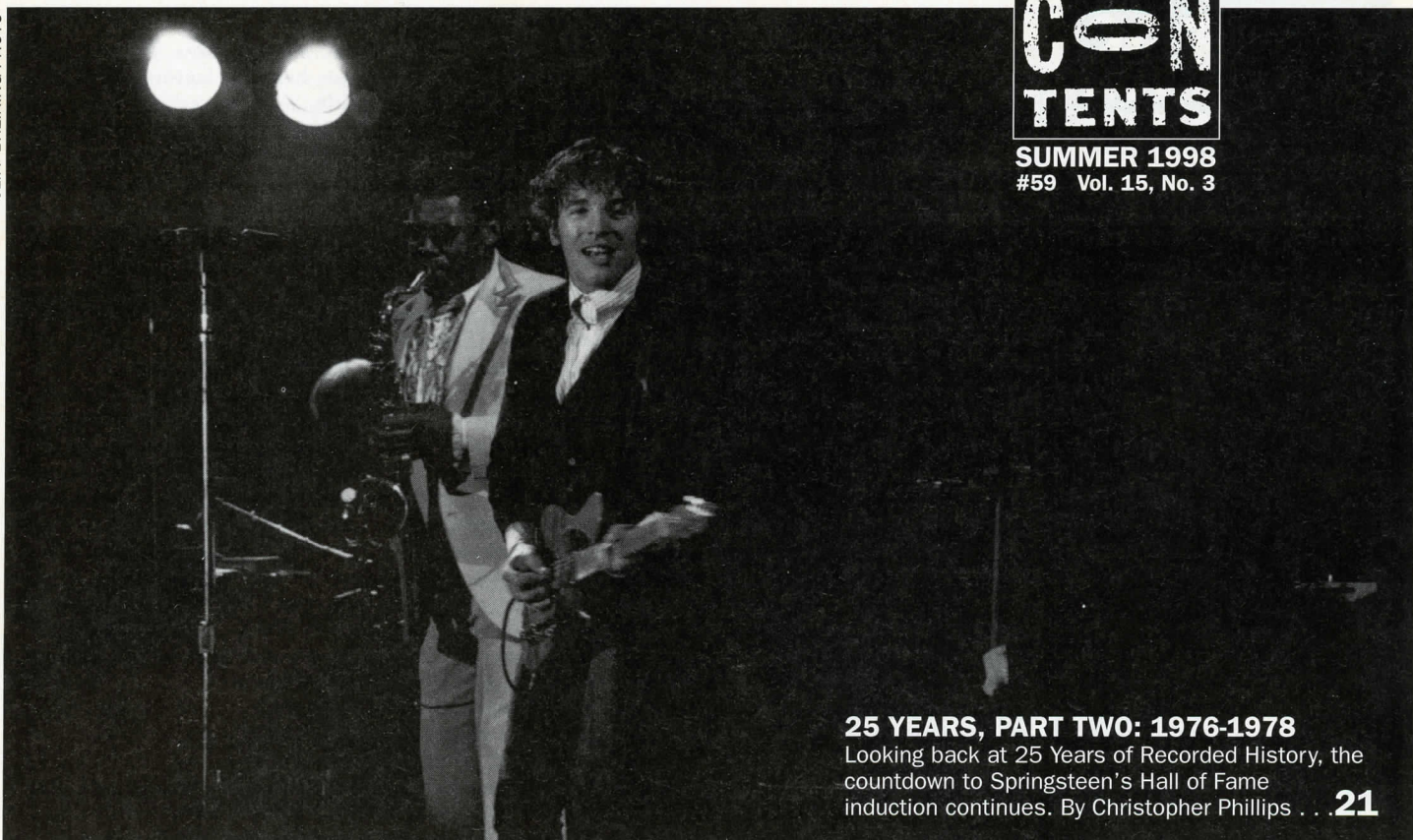
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#59 Vol. 15, No. 3



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Backstreets

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03/25/77 Music Hall, Boston, MA
Cliff Breining Photo

OFF THE WALL

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

4/4/98 Sag Harbor, NY
Helene Eniclerico Photo

LETTERS

SOULS OF THE DEPARTED

Dear Editor:

I would just like to take a moment to share my feelings about the whole "Come Together" Benefit. Patrick King was tragically killed in a Chinese Restaurant on Montgomery Street in Long Branch, two blocks away from my apartment on November 20 of last year. Some people might recognize that date as the night of the WNEW Hungerthon concert, the Springsteen Tribute at the Beacon Theatre. Fortunately for me, I was at that show and not in my neighborhood, but as soon as I arrived at the Long Branch train station I knew something had happened. When something like this occurs, it effects the whole community in some way or

another, but especially when it's your neighborhood. Apparently, Patrick King was a highly decorated, well-respected officer. From the moment this tragedy took place, people around here seemed to really express their sorrow and support for the King family as well as their anger and frustration. It left a lot of people wondering, "What is this world coming to?"

The funeral procession was so large that I had to stay home from work because I couldn't get out of my driveway. It seemed like everyone in Monmouth and Ocean Counties "came together" as a community to grieve the loss of a fellow citizen, a fellow human being.

I also want to make everyone aware that the Long Branch police department, especially Detective Pat Joyce and Captain Kenneth Walker, had a lot to do with the concert. In fact, they

were more involved than Jon Bon Jovi, and I want to make sure they get recognized for doing such a great job putting the whole thing together.

Another person who has been largely overlooked is Bobby Bandiera. I'm not sure how many people know this, but right from the beginning, Bobby took on the task of being the musical director of the show. That means that he was in charge of deciding what songs would be played and in what order, who was going to sing them, and which artists were going to be on stage at what times. This was an extremely heavy load for one person to do, and without Bandiera, we would not have witnessed such an incredible show.

And I would also like to note that in the two-thirds of the show that I was fortunate enough to witness (I was number six out of the six non-ticket holders that were let in), the only thing that was wrong with Bruce's voice was his microphone. Bruce's voice honestly sounded better that night than it has in ten years; however, his microphone was much lower than the others, leaving him often drowned out by the other performers. This is extremely unfortunate for the bootleggers that were on site, but for anyone to say that his voice was weak is inaccurate. However, Southside's voice was still clearly the strongest of the evening: flawless!

Michelle Bruno
via e-mail

work in a factory. "Factory takes his hearing, factory gives him life...": That's exactly what the Pontiac factory was to my own father. It killed him, but at the same time it gave him the things that helped make his life good and provided for his kids. That's a song that means a lot to me. I just wish my own father had lived to 73, like Bruce's did. My father died pretty young, at 59, after working his whole life in an auto factory, before which he served in the Navy and fought in World War II. A pretty significant life, I would say, despite its brevity. And Bruce sings to that kind of sentiment; that's why I love him.

Further, if Bruce hadn't developed an improved relationship with his dad over the years, he might not have written a lot of his more conciliatory songs, like "My Father's House" and "Mansion on the Hill" or even "My Hometown." The first major musical connection I had with my mother was when I played Bruce's version of an old Woody Guthrie song that her mother had sung to her. That's when I realized that, thanks in large part to music and other forms of art, there are connections among all things and that there don't have to be gaps between generations.

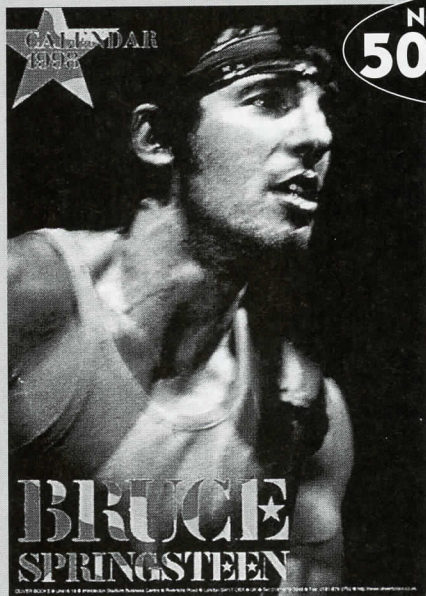
Mark Beardslee
Seoul, Korea

AIN'T NOBODY HERE

Dear Editor:

One little piece of oft-repeated misinformation has been bugging me for the past few years, and after seeing it repeated in the first installment of "25 Years of Recorded History," I figured I should drop you a note. When Bruce played the Roxy in October '75, he did six shows over four nights, not eight shows. There was only one show on opening night, October 16, which was the invitation-only record industry night. Contrary to some published reports, this was not just a *Billboard*-and-guests crowd. Columbia bought out the whole club and passed out the tickets to folks from all over the industry; *Billboard* just had the misfortune to represent, in Bruce's mind, all that was worst about the crowd. There were two shows on Friday the 17th and two more on Saturday

1998 SPRINGSTEEN CALENDAR



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The official 1998 Bruce Springsteen calendar from the UK. This one is from the same company we've been carrying for years, with a huge shot of the Boss for every month of the year—mostly live photos of Bruce and his guitar from the past three tours. The only Bruce calendar for 1998, now on sale.

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MY FATHER'S HOUSE

Dear Editor:

Sadly, Bruce Springsteen's father died yesterday. It seems that a lot of what Bruce did lyrically and musically came directly out of his relationship with his father. It's doubtful Bruce would have had such meaningful impact on the lives he has touched through his art without his dad. A repressive father can spark rebellion in a young man, and had Bruce not been rebellious, he might not have written great songs like "Adam Raised a Cain" or the incomparable "Independence Day."

Without the influence of his father, he wouldn't have written "Factory," a song I can truly relate to because of my own father's

the 18th, but only one show on closing night, the 19th. I drove from Orange County, hoping to buy tickets out front for the late show—only to get there and learn that there *was* no late show.

Steve Pond
via e-mail

LABOR OF LOVE

Dear Editor:

Thanks for the article on Joe Grushecky & the Houserockers (*Backstreets* #57). Thanks also for the Internet info included in the article; it was great to finally be able to get some info on how to track down older albums/tapes from the band that have long been out of print.

Coming Home is a great album, and a fitting follow-up to a classic like *American Babylon*. I can't blame Joe for being leery of his association with Bruce; it's tough to shake a tag once you're labeled. Just ask Bruce how he felt being the "new Dylan" when *Greetings* was released.

It's funny, and maybe it's just me, but I don't think the two sounded anything alike at the start of their careers. The Iron City Houserockers had much more of an urban soul/R&B sound, more like the J. Geils Band than the E Street Band. I don't understand Joe's comments that some of Bruce's fans hate them; must be the same ones who don't like Southside Johnny and the Jukes, or Gary U.S. Bonds, because of their association with Bruce. I guess any artist who collaborates with Bruce will automatically be labeled a clone or protégé, but in the case of Joe and the Houserockers, anyone who makes this mistake is truly missing the point, as well as some great music.

Like most people, I can relate important moments in my life to songs that were playing on a radio nearby, on a stereo, or on a tape deck in a car; songs that were playing for your first dance, your first kiss, the first time you made love, etc. In the fall of 1995, I was listening to *American Babylon* off and on. On New Year's eve, my wife went into labor with our daughter. The labor was an all-day affair, and when my daughter finally was brought into this world at three in the morning, it was the most moving and important moment

of my life. As I drove out of the hospital parking lot at four o'clock on a cold winter's morning in the snow, the song that was playing on my tape deck was "Labor of Love" from *American Babylon*. Driving home with tears rolling down my face, the lyrics hit home with all the sheer force and power I hadn't felt since hearing *Born To Run* for the first time: "Just like a precious gift, sent from up above, it's a labor of love...." If ever lyrics were created for a specific moment, this was it. The song remains special to me to this day. Joe, you've got a fan for life.

And a last word to Joe from an interview Mr. Springsteen once had. When asked about fans he might have left behind, because of his change towards more "adult-oriented" songs. He said, "I don't write songs for the fans, I write 'em for myself. If they want to come along for the ride, that's fine. If not, then they're missing a hell of a ride." Thanks for the ride, Joe, and I hope to see you down the road apiece.

Bill Curtis
Swampscott, MA

BLOOD AND GLASS

Dear Editor:

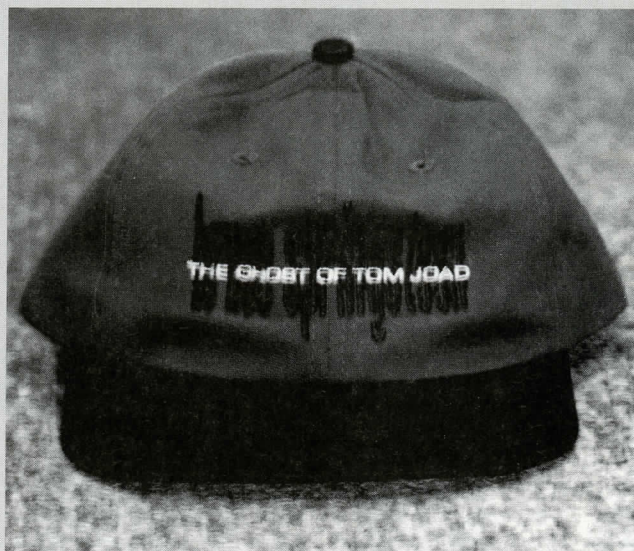
I've been a Bruce fan since the age of four, when my brother introduced him to me with *Born in the USA*. I shut my eyes today and see myself with a bandana on my head, jumping on my grandmother's bed, singing "Glory Days." I've been trying to find everything about him since, but because of the country I live in, news came a little late. This was my first year with *Backstreets*, and I am glad to get the latest news about him as well as other things I never knew.

I wrote this letter because I got my issue #58 this week, and after reading the "One Step Up" letter, I felt... I don't know what I felt. I cried. The fact is that I could never find the words to explain to my friends or family what I liked in Bruce's songs so much, instead of liking what they liked—Spice Girls, etc.

Bruce's songs have helped me throughout the hardest times of my life and also the happier ones. My parents got divorced about two years ago. I can remember being in my room, and

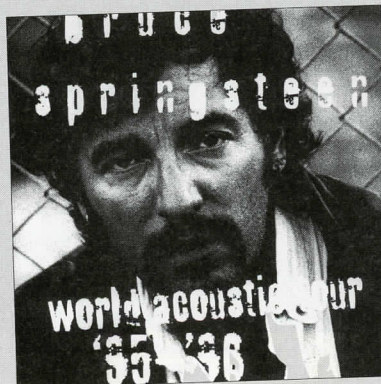
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BOSS TOUR ITEMS



OFFICIAL TOM JOAD BASEBALL CAP

A very sharp, two-toned baseball cap sold on the *Joad* tour. Dark olive green top with black brim, nice embroidery reading: "Bruce Springsteen: Ghost of Tom Joad."\$16

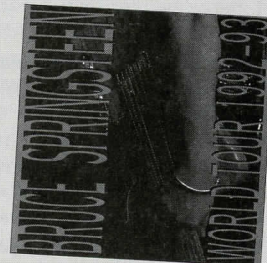


TOM JOAD TOURBOOK

For anyone who missed it on the tour, the official tourbook for the World Acoustic Tour '95-'96 is available through Backstreet Records. A beautiful 32-page book, very colorful and packed with photos (including many shots of Bruce only found in this book), plus song lyrics, an interview with Bruce, and more.....\$20

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A slice of life from 1978

Pizza De Résistance

By Charles R. Cross

On June 25, 1978, I had a piece of pizza that I will always remember. It was in this little joint in downtown Seattle that was as close to an authentic East Coast restaurant as you could find in Washington state (it has since closed down, replaced by a Niketown of all things). The pizza parlor was this little hole in the wall, run by an Italian family—you'd go in there and see the father working behind the counter tossing dough, the daughter waiting on tables, and the grandfather sitting in a corner drinking red wine out of a water glass. It wasn't a fancy place, and every time I ever went there the television was on in the corner. But the pizza was excellent, and it was just around the corner from the Paramount Theater.

There was nothing particularly special about the vegetarian slice on that day in June, but nonetheless I remember it well, simply because everything about that day was so memorable. Bruce Springsteen was playing his second show ever in Seattle, and I had second-row tickets. I'd been at an anti-nuclear demonstration earlier in the day in Satsop, Washington, where I'd just barely managed to practice civil disobedience (I crossed some magic white line) without actually getting arrested. Going to jail on this particular day would have meant that I'd have missed seeing Springsteen, and that would have been a cruel punishment indeed. At the time I was a long-haired, college-student radical trying to keep the spirit of the '60s alive in the '70s. I crossed the white line, got hauled into a school bus and lectured by some state troopers and then was released with a warning after my name was written in a note book. (The Satsop plant was never completed, though the partial construction still sits mothballed as if to remind us it could come back.)

I drove home to Seattle, arriv-

ing an hour before the concert, and decided I better grab some pizza. That's when I finally sat down for the first time in the day and let the adrenaline flow go back to normal. I took a deep breath and took a bite of that East Coast slice.

What's strange about this June day, almost exactly twenty years ago now, is that I remember every specific detail: from eating my pizza in a corner booth (I had to ask someone at the next table for parmesan), to sitting down in my seat at the Paramount, to having to run out to take a leak in the middle of "Ros-alita." I can't remember anything about the day before, the day after, or the day after that, but I remember that day and night like it happened yesterday.

In many ways Springsteen's albums and tours are the markers within my memory. Events aren't connected so much to years as they are to albums and tours. My friend John got married in 1984; I remember it as happening during the first year of the *Born in the USA* tour (I left John's reception for the airport to catch the Cincinnati shows). I think of 1987 not as the year that I turned 30, but as the year that *Tunnel of Love* was released. Turning 30 didn't really mark adulthood for me as much as the Christic Institute shows a few years later in November of 1990: At that point, I stopped being a goof and a drunk and started acting like an adult for the first time in my life. Springsteen's music itself wasn't the inspiration for these changes in my life, but it served as a memorable soundtrack. I'm living proof that as we age our memories come and go, but I've always been glad to have Springsteen's albums and tours as milestones on my journey.

Within these pages you'll read the second installment in our "25 Years of Recorded History" retrospective, including that most memorable year of 1978. After nearly three years Bruce was finally able to release his fourth

album, and the *Darkness on the Edge of Town* tour was the best of Bruce Springsteen's career. There have been other great Bruce tours and individual stands—all have their followers and their high points—but none match the intensity of 1978.

By the time Springsteen and the E Street Band hit Seattle, the tour was a little over a month old. The June Seattle date was the 21st on the tour and one of the first that found the group firing on all cylinders. Though every 1978 performance that I've ever heard (through the magic of taping) has some kind of fire, the first few weeks found the band occasionally rusty. They had taken nearly five months off from live performance before the tour began (in Buffalo on 5/23/78), which at that time seemed like a lifetime. By the time they hit Seattle, the entire band were playing together beautifully: they were as tight as they would ever be in their history.

June began a phenomenal run that would last for the next seven months and end with the amazing New Year's shows in Cleveland, Ohio—the end of the *Darkness on the Edge of Town* tour. In that short time period, Springsteen would perform some of his most legendary concerts: shows that have gone on to top polls by critics and fans; shows that dominate the bootleg CD industry; shows that are still remembered not only as the high watermark in Springsteen's career, but as the pinnacle of live rock 'n' roll performance.

Just the names of a few of the classic bootlegs from this period are enough to make you salivate: *Pièce De Résistance*, *The Bosses Birthday Party*, *Live in the Promised Land*, *Raises Cain*, *The Teenage Werewolf*, *The Jersey Devil*, *Oh Boy*, *Killers in the Sun*, *Pretty Flamingo*, and *Paramount Night*. Almost any one of these titles is a better live album than the official live record—which should be read not so much as an endorsement of bootlegging, but as an endorsement

of the 1978 tour. Though I await the "overview" box set with much anticipation, even writing these words reminds me that what Bruce Springsteen's catalog is most lacking is an official 1978 live album. With an official release, perhaps more than the fanatical few would remember the history of these shows, these magic nights.

I know I will always remember June 25, 1978, sitting there in my prized seat, so close I could actually engage in yelling out requests (remember, I used to be a real pain in the ass). When Springsteen came back for the encore and played "The Promise" solo on piano, I was in heaven. All the stress of the day faded away, and I followed every piano note, trying to be so quiet that I stopped breathing. Was it the music that was so special that night that was making me light-headed, or some bad pizza, or maybe just the fact that I was short of oxygen? The answer... well, I can't remember.

* * *

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BEEN A LONG TIME:

Summer's here and the time is right—after a lengthy, self-imposed hiatus, Southside Johnny is back on the road. Southside and the Jukes played several West Coast gigs in the spring, and they'll be havin' a party all summer. Catch them if you can. . . . Vini "Mad Dog" Lopez is now the caddie master at Deal Golf and Country Club, as profiled by Stephen Edelson in the *Asbury Park Press*. Lopez reports, "I'm so busy here now I hardly have time to play the drums anymore." The article also reveals that E Streeters have begun to receive royalties from album sales, with Mad Dog saying, "It makes me feel like all the work I put in the past was worth it. Springsteen did it all on his own. His lawyers, working with Sony, came up with figures to pay us." . . . You can occasionally still find Garry Tallent on stage, as he recently played with Jim Lauderdale at Tramps in New York. "I can't commit to a whole lot," Garry told *Billboard* in a nice profile of Tallent and his Moon Dog Studio, "but I play with the Delevantes whenever the opportunity arises—without it taking up my whole life. But my main commitment now is to the studio and producing." . . . Tommy Sims is working with Amy Grant again, playing bass on her current tour and joining her in a duet onstage. . . . Another '92-93 tour alum, guitarist Shayne Fontayne, has also been on the road, touring with Marc Cohn.

SOUTHSIDE JOHNNY AND THE ASBURY JUKES TOUR DATES

July 3	Sea Bright, NJ	Tradewinds
July 6	Amagansett, NY	Stevens Talk House
July 7	Uncasville, CT	Mohegan Sun
July 9	Alexandria, VA	Birchmere
July 11	Cleveland, OH	Nautica
July 12	Chicago, IL	House of Blues
July 14	Minneapolis, MN	Cabooze
July 15	Milwaukee, WI	Shank Hall
July 22	New York, NY	World Trade Center
August 22	Danbury, CT	Ives Center
August 28	Hampton Beach, NH	Hampton Beach Casino
September 4	Pittsburgh, PA	Rib Cook-off
September 5	Cleveland, OH	A Taste of Cleveland

Above dates were confirmed as of press time, dates are subject to change.

DIRT ON MY HANDS:

When *Esquire* recently asked Chris Whitley—a *Backstreets* fave—whether he preferred playing arenas or clubs, Whitley responded by invoking Bruce: "You can turn anywhere into an intimate experience. I saw Springsteen turn the Meadows into a club by including people in the experience." Whitley and Springsteen have been mutual fans for years; if you attended the '92-93 tour, you probably heard "Big Sky Country" on Bruce's pre-show tape. Producer Craig Street, who has been working with Patti Scialfa on her upcoming release, also produced Whitley's latest disc, *Dirt Floor*—an album Springsteen told Street he's really into. According to the producer, Whitley took a day to visit Patti's sessions but, alas, didn't play. . . . As rumored earlier, Linda Ronstadt covers "If I Should Fall Behind" on her new album. *We Ran*, her return to rock/pop music, is out now. . . . Austin's Jimmy Lafave has been covering Springsteen's "Valentine's Day" in concert. You'll find Lafave's version of the song on his upcoming CD on Bohemia Beat Records.

A HOUSE ON A HILL:

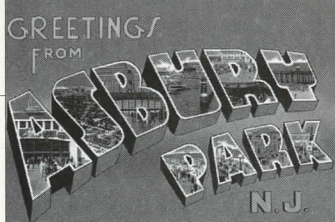
Springsteen's old home on Telegraph Hill Road—considerably remodeled since he lived there in the late '70s—recently went up for auction. The house was where Bruce wrote and rehearsed much of the material for *The River*. . . . Another site from Boss history may be not only changing hands, but disappearing forever. Milwaukee's Uptown The-



Linda Lee and friend Mark share Backstreets with Emmylou Harris.

ater is in danger of being wiped off the map—not by a bomb this time, but by city officials. The landmark theater, built in 1926 and the site of Springsteen's legendary "bomb scare" show back in 1975, will probably be razed to make way for a police district building. . . . Speaking of sad news, the death of Frank Sinatra was mourned by many; fellow Jersey son Springsteen was among those in attendance at the funeral service. . . . In early March, there was a rare Bruce sighting at Madison Square Garden, as the Boss took in the Knicks-Bulls game. Michael Jordan told *ESPN* magazine, "Springsteen came out to the last Knicks game, the one everybody said could be my last in the city. I don't know Bruce, but I know

his accomplishments. Him being there was pretty big." . . . They're singing a familiar tune in Tampa Bay. The city's new baseball team has a theme song that may ring a bell, with the already baseball-friendly "Glory Days" revamped to become "Devil Rays." . . . The cable music channel VH-1 recently compiled a list of the 100 greatest rock artists of all time. Springsteen weighs in at number 27. None too shabby in the scheme of things, considering he beat out the likes of Neil Young, R.E.M. and Buddy Holly. But how do you explain Bruce ranking below the Eagles, the Doors and Pink Floyd? VH-1's list was compiled by polling 600 or so of the rockers themselves—which only goes to show: trust the art, not the artist. 🐾



Checking in with Big Danny

Actually, Greetings From Dublin

By Robert Makin

Asbury Park native Big Danny Gallagher has been friends with Bruce Springsteen since the Upstage days of the late 1960s. A member of Dr. Zoom & the Sonic Boom, the short-lived band Springsteen formed between Steel Mill and the Bruce Springsteen Band, Gallagher served as the Boss' road manager through 1974.

After living in Colorado for a while, the 300-pound, ZZ Top-looking Irish-American returned home to Asbury Park, where he formed the Renegade Blues Band and the Boppers in the '80s and the Lost Leader Band in the '90s. The latter group, featuring drummer Steve Schraeger of such great '70s Asbury bands as Cahoots and Cold, Blast & Steel, recorded an excellent blues-rock album, *Sign of Faith*, in the mid-'90s. The standout track, "Summertime in My Hometown," was a lament about how decay and corruption destroyed the once great Jersey Shore resort.

After Gallagher grew frustrated with the rapid decline of Asbury and even more intolerant of the music industry's deaf ears, he moved to Dublin. For the past three years, he has been part of a swinging pub scene there reminiscent of Asbury's better days. His group, Big Danny & the Business, features some of Dublin's most sought-after pub players.

I spoke with Gallagher about his music, living in Ireland during the recent historic peace settlement, being visited by Springsteen there, jamming with his old friend at the Paramount Theatre and the decline of Asbury Park.

So what do you think of this recent peace accord?

Around St. Patrick's Day, I spent three weeks in the North. Everybody up there is tired of the fighting. When the vote came in at 73 percent, everybody down here was thrilled. But there's still a long way to go. A lot of people made a living out of

the troubles. A lot of the conditions on the peace agreement look really tough, the way it's written now.

Everybody in Northern Ireland voted 73 percent to 27, and down here it was 93 to 7 percent, so a landslide majority wants peace. All the people want it, because they're tired of all the bullshit, of blowing people up. Around Christmas, they were indiscriminately shooting people up there.

Where's your family from?

County Donegal, but I'm living in Dublin. I have a little flat a half-mile from the center of town. They came over around the 1850s, the time of the potato famine. That's why I'm always for the underdog. A lot of people don't know that trouble in Ireland began 800 years ago. The king saw this beautiful island and said, "Let's take it." He sent Cromwell in and he slaughtered everybody. To think racial troubles in America are only 500 years old. This is 800 years of struggle against the English.

Here I am in the middle of this peace happening. It's pretty cool. It's nice to see history in action without having a president getting blown away.

What is the music scene like, particularly compared to Asbury Park?

The pub scene is wild. Considering what it used be like in Asbury, the scene here is even more dense than Asbury was. But now shit is changing fast. Americans are coming here to get away from the laws of drunk driving. The old Dublin pub culture is getting more of an American consciousness because of MTV. When I visited here ten years ago I saw that that shit was coming here too. Kids are going that way, whichever way the boob tube tells the kids to go.

Still, a lot of people in Ireland are free thinkers. People here are way more literate, way more than I'm normally associated with. These people are into poet-



Big Danny's Irish eyes are smiling: Asbury Park, 11/26/96.

ry and plays. Myself, I'm not much into plays, but poetry, I love that stuff. I've been reading a lot of Emerson. He was a pretty slick dude. Who would think you could get great information from a guy who lived 150 years ago. This is a cool place.

Bruce visited you in Ireland?

When he was here to play [in March, 1996], I got a phone call. We had a drink, and I went with him up to Belfast, and the next night he had his show here in Dublin. After dinner, we went to his hotel and I showed him pictures. And then, what do you know, I'm sitting there at the show next to Bono and the Edge [from U2]. I told Bono and Edge, "Hey, you mind keeping it down?"

I'm trying to listen to my man, here." I was like, Jesus, this is just like the old days. My man with a guitar and me. He was playing some real nice stuff just by himself. It was really nice to see the mature guy up there singing about what matters. After the show, we went to Little's Bordello. It used to be a whorehouse. Now it's a nightclub.

You then performed with him at the Asbury show in 1996, while you were back home visiting.

That was nuts. I hadn't played with him since Big Man's West [in 1982], when he gave me the gold album for *Greetings*. Before that, it was with the Zoom band. So when I got the call, I was glad. We had a really nice time

together. It was the same as it always was. No matter how much I hallucinate about the guy with his fame and fortune, he hasn't changed.

I try to forget the badness that I left behind with that scene, but every time I turn around, he's on the radio. He's like a ghost. I figure, here I am in Ireland, I'll put Bruce on the backseat, but a bus goes by with his *Greatest Hits* album on the side. There ain't no getting away from that guy.

Tell me about your band.

When I got here, I'd go out like I did at home to see who was around to jam with. There was this band, the Business, looking for a lead singer. So I gave them a CD, and they gave it a listen. I said, "I'm looking to play," and they invited me to do a couple of songs. We've been playing together ever since.

These are full-time musicians who play with everybody. If you're a good player, you can make a nice living for yourself here. It's like a working vacation. But the gigs are only two hours: you start at 9 p.m. and stop at 11 p.m. Then the bars close.

When you go into a pub, everybody's singing. It's a little overwhelming. But I've landed on my feet running, doing what I'm best at—the blues.

You can't corner these guys into rehearsing, because they're always busy doing something else. So I want to go into the country to build something with my own songs.

I guess I'm here to figure it out as far as what's left for me. I'm just trying to figure out what I want the rest of the way and how to get it. I really want to play, and over here it seems to suit me better than over there.

Before I left Asbury Park, my hometown, I had big, thick curtains, because I didn't want to look out the window. I'd hear gunshots late at night. My landlord's car had bullet creases in the headrest from two idiots who were shooting up the front lawn. Nobody knows what the fuck they're doing there. I'm not bad-mouthing my friends, but you got cops doing illegal things, up

on charges for this and that. It's like some old Westerns, all these bad guys who are supposed to be good guys. Now I've lived in Asbury my whole life, but it stopped me from wanting to be there. I don't like what it's become. They can have it.

I feel bitter, because the place has no future. I started thinking, "How long am I going to be on the planet? This where I live—Beirut, N.J." It gets right down to the bones of me, man. What a great place to live Asbury Park was. Why ain't it now? Filthy lucre. Too much greed.

You wrote a great song about that.

"Summertime in My Hometown." It all came in one big lump through the voice of Tom

I told Bono and Edge, "Hey, you mind keeping it down? I'm trying to listen to my man, here."

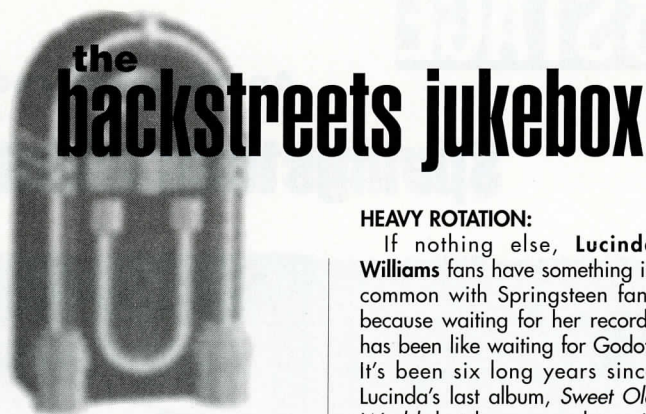
Waits. I remember being bad one night. I went to Mrs. Jay's the next day and had some tomato juice, feeling pretty down and out. I started discussing what's going on in the town with this kid, and I start to rhyme while I'm talking. The kid left and I sat there and wrote it. It turned out great. I was able to feel good when I sang that song.

I came over here because—when all else fails, jump into the fucking unknown. They have some of my favorite musical things here, like fiddles and pipes. I want to hear a band like the Chieftains with Motown horn parts.

I got a letter from a friend saying how we used to be the worst-dressed guys chasing around in nightclubs, now we're the best-dressed guys staying home and watching videos. But over here life in the nightclubs isn't over just because you're over 35. There's a market for me here. When I walk into the little towns out in the country, suddenly there's a commotion because I'm there.

Well, Danny, anything else you'd like to add?

Yeah, the folks in Europe reading *Backstreets*, let them know I'll come play for them for cheap. I want to see the rest of Europe. They can get in touch with me at 18 Ebenezer Terrace, Dublin 8, Ireland. 🍀



HEAVY ROTATION:

If nothing else, **Lucinda Williams** fans have something in common with Springsteen fans because waiting for her records has been like waiting for Godot. It's been six long years since Lucinda's last album, *Sweet Old World*, but her new release is one of the rare instances of an album worth the wait. ***Car Wheels on a Gravel Road*** is magnificent, an album filled with songs that go right to the heart of the American experience.

Williams scores because she writes simple, slice-of-life songs that are emotional powerhouses. The title song is written from the perspective of a five-year-old, and it may be the best song ever crafted about the mixed-up confusion of youth. Most of the songs are about searching for something lost: love, innocence, place, or faith. And though this album is soaked with melancholy, Williams finds renewal in the search. Songs like "Can't Let Go" and "Metal Firecracker" find redemption inside suffering. The album finds her adrift in the landscape of the American South with the song titles alone suggesting a restlessness and a never-ending wanderlust: "Jackson," "Greenville," "Lake Charles." "Right in Time" is a wonderful, lusty song about sexuality; it's the only time on the album that Williams finds comfort in one place or one man.

Though the songwriting is the great strength here, the music is perfectly matched to these themes, and Williams sings these songs as if they are precious little births. The production (by Roy Bittan) works well, though I still think I like some of these songs better live where Williams' voice is warmer and less perfect. This is not a slick studio album, but one does get the sense that Williams has sweated over each and every note. It's an effort that has produced a landmark album; one only hopes that the next chapter isn't so far off.

—Charles R. Cross

1. Lucinda Williams
Car Wheels on a Gravel Road
Mercury (advance cassette)

2. Bruce Springsteen
Darkness of the Edge of Town
Columbia (CD)

3. Van Morrison
The Philosopher's Stone
Polydor (CD)

4. Massive Attack
Mezzanine
Virgin (CD)

5. Neil Finn
Try Whistling This
WORK (CD)

6. Lou Reed
Perfect Night: Live in London
Reprise (CD)

7. Fugazi
End Hits
Dischord (CD)

8. Pulp
This Is Hardcore
Island (CD)

9. Jeff Buckley
Sketches for My Sweetheart the Drunk
Columbia (CD)

10. Billy Bragg & Wilco
Mermaid Avenue
Elektra (CD)

10
Monster
Discs to Play Today and Everyday

Another redhead gets the job done

Springsteen Salutes Elaine Steinbeck

By Christopher Phillips

Bruce Springsteen may have played some small halls on the *Tom Joad* tour, but when's the last time he played a 300-seater? For a woman close to his heart, Springsteen did just that on April 4, as the tiny Bay Street Theatre in Sag Harbor, NY, paid tribute to Elaine Steinbeck. Elaine is the widow of writer John and a woman who has clearly touched many lives. A long-time Sag Harbor resident, she has generously supported the local theater as volunteer, patron and "best friend" since its opening seven years ago. The Bay Street's Main Stage was dedicated to her as part of the tribute.

The evening chronicled Elaine's life, her extensive work in the theater and her contributions to the Bay Street. The salute began with black and white photos projected on stage as a taped voiceover played of Elaine telling stories about her life. She was one of the first female stage managers on Broadway, where she stage-managed Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!*, among others. On tape, she recalled her reaction at reading the lyrics to "Oh What a Beautiful Morning" for the first time: "What is this garbage?!" With that, Bruce took the stage with acoustic guitar and harmonica to perform the song.

WHAT IS THIS GARBAGE?

•4/4/98

Oh What a Beautiful Morning
The Ghost of Tom Joad

The Elaine Steinbeck Tribute
Bay Street Theatre
Sag Harbor, NY


•5/21/98 (broadcast)

The Ghost of Tom Joad
Across the Border

New York, NY, for *Where It's At: The Rolling Stone State of the Union* (ABC)

Bay Street Theatre

SPECIAL CELEBRATION!



Bay Street
Dedicates its Stage
to
our extraordinary friend,
Elaine Steinbeck
Saturday, April 4, 1998
7 pm

Guest artists may include
Edward Albee • Charles Busch
Betty Comden and Adolph Green • E.L. Doctorow
Roddy McDowall • Terrence McNally
Gary Sinise • Bruce Springsteen • Elaine Stritch
Champagne Reception • All-Star Salute
Dinner at the American Hotel

For information,
please call 725-0818



Springsteen sat next to Steinbeck in the front row until the end of the tribute, when he would take the stage one more time. In between were heartfelt tributes from Edward Albee, Terrence McNally, E.L. Doctorow, Roddy McDowell and others. Toward the end of the night Gary Sinise performed a monologue of Tom Joad's parting words to his mother, words familiar to anyone who saw the *Joad* tour. Sinise said that he had played the character in over 400 performances, and thanked Elaine for granting him the rights to perform John's work over the years—"the greatest projects of my life." Bruce then stepped to the stage from his seat. He whispered, "This is for you, Elaine," and sang "The Ghost of Tom Joad," again on acoustic guitar and harmonica.

Elaine Steinbeck can also be added to Bruce's list of favorite redheads. After "Joad," before bringing her on stage to close the evening, Bruce had one last salute for Elaine. He told the small crowd that he should have played "Red Headed Woman," because "blondes are fun, but

when it comes to gettin' the dirty job done you need a red-headed woman."

Springsteen's friendship with Steinbeck goes back to 1995, when he got in touch to ask permission to use the name of the character from *The Grapes of Wrath*. For his first New York concert of the *Joad* tour, Bruce had a limo bring her to the show. He performed a benefit concert for the Steinbeck Research Center in October of 1996, at when Elaine presented him with a signed, first-edition copy of *The Grapes of Wrath*.

From a small room of 300 to an audience of millions: Springsteen's next showing came as *Rolling Stone* celebrated their 30th anniversary with a television special airing on May 21. *Where It's At: The Rolling Stone State of the Union* included several interviews with Springsteen, as well as two recent performances filmed specifically for the broadcast: "The Ghost of Tom Joad" and "Across the Border."

The performance itself took place in late January. The two songs were recorded on a New York soundstage, rather than in a

concert setting, but they marked Springsteen's first live performances of *Tom Joad* material with a full band. Springsteen played acoustic guitar and harmonica as usual and was joined by musicians from the *Tom Joad* album sessions: Danny Federici on keyboards for "Joad" and accordion for "Across the Border"; Marty Rifkin on pedal steel guitar; Gary Mallabar on drums; and an as-yet unidentified bass player.

Rolling Stone publisher Jann Wenner talked to the *Washington Post* about the historical perspective that an artist like Springsteen adds to the youth-culture oriented *Where It's At*: "Bruce came along in the '70s and '80s. But he's emblematic of any number of artists, including the Beatles and the Stones. They are still widely listened to because there are truths to what they are saying.... There's a number of artists around whose work today is as vital as it ever was. And I don't think that you can talk about young America without putting it in perspective."

Springsteen was also featured in the magazine's 30th anniversary issue, profiled in a feature called *The American Dream 1998*.

—additional reporting by
Bernie Ranellone

The year of living famously

Box Set to Cap Hall Induction Activity

By Christopher Phillips

With nearly three years having gone by since *The Ghost of Tom Joad*, the wait is nearly over. Bruce Springsteen's Rock and Roll Hall of Fame eligibility this year brings even more exciting prospects for fans—not necessarily a new album per se, but new projects are in the works that arguably add up to something even better.

Toward the end of this year Bruce will have what one assumes will be his first best-seller on his hands, as Avon Books publishes *Bruce Springsteen: Songs*. The book, commemorating Springsteen's 25 years as a recording artist, will be a complete anthology of his recorded lyrics, and Bruce himself has been very involved with the project. *Songs* will include original commentary from Springsteen reflecting on his work, written specifically for the book. We can also expect the incorporation of "hundreds of never-before-published images," according to Avon, from many of the usual suspects: Lynn Goldsmith, Neal Preston, Annie Leibovitz, and others. Scheduled for December publication as a 304-page, 9" x 11" hardcover, *Songs* is shaping up to be a major—and unique—

addition to Springsteen's body of work.

Even better than a book written by Bruce is the prospect of an official release of previously recorded, unreleased songs, apparently also planned for late 1998. The astoundingly prolific Springsteen has often commented—for the last 20 years, in fact—that he'd like to find a way to put out the backlog of tracks that didn't fit on the albums. Though there has yet to be any official announcement, the long-awaited box set of such material is definitely in the pipeline. Springsteen reportedly spent the first few months of this year going through tapes, with the resulting selections for the box numbering around 100. Several sources within Springsteen's label have confirmed the project privately, with the *Boston Globe* reporting in late May, "Yes, the rumbling you've heard about a six-CD boxed set is true, a Sony source has confirmed."

Though it is too early to be sure of any details, prognostication among fans about the box has begun in earnest. With access to numerous outtakes via commonly traded tapes, fans at least have a suggestion of some of the songs a box could include, but it is difficult to determine just how representative those known

outtakes are of the complete picture. There is plenty of room for surprise, particularly with only a few unreleased tracks from the last 15 years making their way into collecting circles. Over that period, rumors have circulated of numerous unreleased sessions and albums "in the can." Recent collaborators have mentioned a few from the '90s alone—a rockabilly project, and a 1994 album recorded with the '92-93 touring band—that have yet to see the light of day. Don't be surprised if the box does include more

recent material, as Sony will probably be looking for a single to fit in on current rock radio.

Another possibility is that the set will include a disc of new recordings with the E Street Band. This may be only conjecture at this point, but it's not at all outlandish. "As odd as it sounds, the scenario would actually make some sense," notes one longtime Springsteen observer. "Bruce has talked about wanting to work with the band again, but at the same time he's clearly always had the desire to move forward with each album. Releasing new material with the E Street Band as part of a retrospective box, outside the continuum of his regular studio albums, would be a way for him to have his cake and eat it too."

Along with the box set, we can probably look for a major catalog upgrade as well. In the U.S., *Born to Run* is the only Springsteen CD to have been remastered. Sony Japan has issued remastered versions of both *Born to Run* and *Born in the U.S.A.*—with deluxe packaging that begs to be applied to the rest of the back catalog. But to date, the remainder of Springsteen's albums have yet to receive any special treatment. The current status of Bruce CDs, in both sound and packaging, suggests a reissue-series



Bruce's book, due in December from Avon.

waiting to happen; sources suggest that it will in the near future, and coinciding with a box set release seems to be the logical move from the label's standpoint.

With an extensive outpouring of product from such a major artist, it seems a safe bet that Sony will want to pull out all the stops with promotions. While any talk of a tour would be pure speculation, individual performances—like the Sony Studios gig used to promote *Greatest Hits* in 1995—seem like a no-brainer. One possibility that has arisen in recent months has been another appearance on MTV's *Unplugged*. Though Springsteen played the show in 1992, he chose at the time to forego the program's acoustic format. *Billboard* reported in May that Springsteen was in negotiation with MTV, and a "real" MTV *Unplugged* taping was scheduled in the spring. The date of the performance was soon making the rounds when, just as quickly, it was canceled—or at least postponed. While some thought that the death of his father may have caused the change in plans, the spring taping was actually called off beforehand. The postponement has some Springsteen-watchers speculating that he'll do the show in the fall to better coordinate timing with the box. 🎸

Douglas Springsteen Dies at 73

Bruce Springsteen's father, Douglas "Dutch" Springsteen, died on April 26. The elder Springsteen, a World War II veteran and native of Freehold, NJ, moved to California roughly 30 years ago. He died in Belmont, CA, at the age of 73.

In a statement, Bruce said: "My father and I had a very loving relationship. With family all around, he celebrated his 73rd

birthday, and my parents recently marked 50 years together. They had a warm and caring marriage. I feel lucky to have been so close to my dad as I became a man and a father myself. My mother, my sisters and I love him and will miss him very much."

A funeral Mass was held on April 30 at St. Rose of Lima in Freehold. 🎸

GHOST DANCING

in

ASBURY PARK

A Profile of DAN BERN

Although it is only the last weekend of March, in that special world where the magic of music knows no season it feels like the first night of the rock 'n' roll summer. A restless El Niño-powered wind has driven the temperatures unseasonably into the 80s, scattering sand like ghost-town tumbleweed across the deserted boardwalk, past the run-down clubs and hotels, the empty abandoned lots. Twisted piles of decaying rubble from shipwrecked dreams and fading memories of a brighter time serve as tombstones for the long-departed spirits in the night. They mark the territory where, a generation ago, the last outpost of the lost brigade of a once great rock 'n' roll army led by Bruce Springsteen went forth from these streets and changed the face of popular music in America. Greetings from Asbury Park indeed.

Inside a motor home parked just off Main Street sit Dan Bern and his band: Wil Masisak on keyboards, Eben Grace on bass, drummer Gordy Gale, and Tom Ianniello, handling special tactics and ordnance. They're in the early stage of a grueling, low-budget, cross-country tour of one-night stands that stretch ten weeks before them. Bern's new album, *Fifty Eggs*, is due for release in a week.

For more than a year in the national press and on FM radio, Bern has been touted as either the new Bruce Springsteen or a modern-day Bob Dylan. On the Internet, there has been fevered whispering and heated debate about Dan Bern: Is he? Isn't he? The next big thing?

Tonight, before soundcheck, as the sun goes down, Bern and his dog Gidget pile into an old Chevy Blazer and cruise the deserted streets. Marking the stations at the crossroads of this once-capital of the rock 'n' roll world, he pauses wordlessly in front of the Stone Pony, the shuttered Asbury Park Rock and Roll Museum, the abandoned ruins of the amusement park, the empty lots where once stood legendary clubs. Allowing the spirits of the approaching night and the distant past to wash over him, Bern—a tall, athletic kid from Iowa by way of L.A., by way of a hundred thousand road miles under his belt—appears on the surface to be anything but the next big thing. He's leaning into the haunted wind blowing in across the turbulent Atlantic from Lithuania, his



PHOTO © CHARLIE FRICK

faraway ancestral home. He's ghost hunting near the water's edge. It's something he seems to have a natural talent for, and it's also his particular cross to bear.

The night of March 28, 1998, as Dan Bern played the Saint club on Main Street in Asbury Park, the shimmering transparent veil, separating what is here with us from what has all but for memory and legend gone on, wavered and evaporated like the morning fog.

People seem to need a hook to hang a familiar label on. There have been several obvious comparisons repeatedly made between Bruce, Dylan, and Dan Bern: the guitar, harmonica, song construction; the first-person approach to storytelling; the voice that at times appears to carry more of a message than a tune. As writers, all three men have a studied fascination with outlaws, the plight of the common man, people damaged in love, victims and heroes of unusual moral and spiritual circumstances.

Searching further back to their creative roots, the deeper connection between these troubadours becomes obvious. They are the spiritual descendants of a common musical ancestor, Woody Guthrie.

Another more immediate connection is producer Chuck Plotkin. It was Chuck who produced Dylan's *Shot Of Love* album; Chuck who for many years has, in his own words, "...helped Bruce make his records." And as legend has it, it was Chuck who, while working on an album with Springsteen in Los Angeles, discovered Dan Bern.

Back in the early '90s, Dan was doing a weekly solo gig at Genghis Kohn, a renowned L.A. folk venue. He had developed a serious following—no small feat in the notoriously fickle and insular L.A. music scene. Bern was touring folk festivals, selling hundreds of raw, self-produced tapes out of the trunk of his car.

Plotkin, recalling the circumstances of his initial meeting, told me that something unexpected took place: "The fact is that Dan Bern is the only artist in the last 20 years, since I started, who I've ever found—just about bumped into on the street—and decided that I had to sponsor. The first night that I heard Dan play, maybe it was seven years ago, I

was hearing all kinds of new artists all of the time. I remember they said to me, 'You got to go and see this kid.' I got off early one night and went down there, and it was like, 'Whoa! This kid has the real stuff. This is the real deal here.' Dan was just in a league of his own. He was so much better by miles that I felt like, okay, I've got to roll with this. I've got to do what ever I can to help him. I don't know what it'll be: I'll advise him if he wants advice; he needs some dough, I'll get him some dough; he needs some studio time, I'll get him studio time."

After recording a bit with Plotkin in an L.A. studio and hitting the road for a while, Dan returned to L.A., where Plotkin had an idea. "I knew I wanted to have some time, didn't want to rush," Plotkin explains. "Dan didn't have a place to live. Micajah Ryan, an engineer who I had worked with, needed a place to stay. I said, 'Let's get a house.' They could live upstairs and we could do the taping downstairs. We borrowed some gear from Bruce, bought a couple of key things—microphones, a little board—and rented some other stuff." Dan called in his long-time friend and road partner, Josh Zawaduk, on bass, throat-singing and harmonium. They moved into the house and started to rehearse. No deal, no paperwork, no label involvement, no problem.

"It gave us a month," Plotkin says. "In a real studio, we would have had to record, mix, and be out of there in a week. The tapes have a real rough sound, on purpose. No fancy anything: every vocal on those sessions was live."

In the meantime, word of Dan's incendiary appearance at the High Sierras Folk Festival reached some bigwigs in the industry. Dave Margulies, an A&R guy for WORK Records, a Sony subsidiary, scored Dan a meeting with the label's honchos. As Plotkin remembers it, Dan did a short solo set in a conference room at the label's corporate offices. "It was a powerful six or seven songs," says Plotkin. "He wasn't pulling any punches. There was no attempt to present himself as something he wasn't. He wanted to be sure they understood who he was."

They understood, and within a month a deal was in place. The immediate result of that deal was *Dan Bern*, an 11-track CD released in early 1997 which contained some of the material recorded in the

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHARLIE FRICK

house. While he was waiting for the record company to gear up for the release, Bern cranked out and pressed *Boy Dog Van*, a six-song EP of mostly acoustic tunes, and hit the road again. He wound up as the opening act up for a handful of Ani DiFranco's concerts, including a huge show in New York's Central Park. Ani's fans immediately took a liking to him. Within a short time the comparisons began to include her name as well. Some labeled him DiFranco's electric-folk-punk male counterpart. When their respective tours ended in the fall, she took Bern and some of the members of her backup band into a studio in Texas—again with no deal, no complications—and cut enough tracks for a full-length release. The result of those sessions is Bern's new, DiFranco-produced CD, *Fifty Eggs*.

In Asbury Park, speculation amidst the line of fans stretching around the block outside the Saint is heated up by word that—at that very moment, no more than an hour away—Plotkin and Bruce are doing some ghost hunting of their own. Rumor has it that they are spending their days in the studio, going through old tapes for a possible box set. No matter who is booked to appear in which club on the Jersey shore, there is always that glimmer of hope that *He* will show up. Especially considering the Plotkin-Bern connection, maybe tonight Bruce will make the show.

By the time the doors open, the club is sold out. At the stroke of midnight, a wave of applause greets Bern as he takes the stage. He paces in the darkness as the opening chords, strangely familiar, tumble from his guitar slow and deliberate. He looks out steely-eyed over the crowd, steps to the mike, and with a growl in his voice sings, "The screen door slams...."

Immediately the hometown chant kicks in: "Brooooo!" A wave of applause and cheers flies toward the stage, as the crowd begins to sing the all-too-familiar lyrics. Bern continues to strum his guitar, letting the moment hang in the air. He sings to the end of the first verse, and then on the line "praying in vain, waiting for a savior to rise from these streets," as if on cue, his guitar cuts out in a blare of amplifier hum. Silence. Bern, still strumming, looks down to see his lead cord missing from its socket.

"Plug it in, man!" he yells to no one in particular. "Help me out! What happened to my fuckin' guitar? Damn it, that never happens to *him*!"

He stops the band, bends down to pick up the cord and plugs it back in; the crowd breaks into wild applause as the ghosts, having made their presence known with this little bit of telekinetic slight of hand, settle down to watch the magic unfold. The songs that tumble freely out of his bag of tricks carry the images of the popular media icons, heroes, villains, and mythical characters who populate our collective consciousness. Tiger Woods makes an appearance, as do Madonna, Monica Lewinsky, Marilyn Monroe, Charles Manson, Marilyn Manson, Jesus, the L.A. riots, Michael Jordan, Nike, Hitler, the Chelsea Hotel—not to mention Bern's sister, as well as former and current lovers. God makes an appearance as well. When he plays what many consider to be his signature song, "Jerusalem," he mixes in a chorus of "Nebraska" and a verse of "Atlantic City" for the crowd.

The set swings wildly: hard-edged, fast-paced rockers with driving rhythms and wicked guitar solos played against the beat mix freely with his acoustic, so-called "folk" material, in which the band lays back as Bern pulls the web of intimacy tighter. At times he sings while stepping away from the microphone, forcing the audience to quiet down, move forward and hang on his every word.

He straps on his acoustic guitar, and the band retreats to the shadows at the back of the stage as Bern finger-picks the opening lines of "Talkin' Woody, Bob, Bruce and Dan Blues." The song is a shaggy dog rendition of a mythical story about Bern hopping a barbed wire fence and letting himself into Springsteen's bedroom. Although this is not quite the moment the faithful have waited for, the crowd senses Bruce's disembodied presence and are drawn deeper into the story. Bern pushes it to the extreme. In the middle of the song, the Boss gets some lines which Bern sings in Springsteen's voice. He is feeding the ghosts—the crowd erupts, and a familiar spirit fills the night.

The next morning, Dan, his guitar, and Gidget walk the deserted boardwalk. As we sit on the bench in front of Madam Marie's, I wonder aloud about Springsteen's influence on Bern's music and ask what made him choose to open with "Thunder Road."

Strumming his guitar, staring off towards the ocean, he was silent for several moments. "I guess it was a little tribute. You know, looking around the town and realizing where some of those great

**It was like,
"Whoa! This kid
has the real
stuff. This is the
real deal here."
Dan was just in
a league of his
own.**

-CHUCK PLOTKIN

songs came from, it felt cool to do, felt really special to me."

"Where does Bruce figure in your personal mythology?"

"Well, the two most famous people I've ever met were Wilt Chamberlain and Bruce Springsteen. To me they are similar in that they are absolute giants, like nobody else. Irreplaceable—you know, national treasures."

"How did you and Bruce meet?"

"Well, Chuck took me to Bruce's house on New Years Eve a few years back. I don't drink a whole lot, but before we got there, I had as many Jack Daniels as I could force myself to. There were only about 15 people there. I got to sit down and talk with him a little bit. In the short time I talked to him, what really impressed me was that I asked him something, and I had the distinct impression that what I had asked was being honestly and clearly considered. His answer was based only upon his answer and nothing else. No need for mystery or subterfuge. It was so cool, because if you talk to someone who seems like they have something to protect, and ask them a question, you can almost see the filtering process going on. Like, you ask 'em, and it goes into their filter, and it gets mushed around in there and something else comes back to you. That just wasn't there with him.

"We talked mostly about Chuck," Bern goes on, "because he was our common link. Bruce said that Chuck was a rare combination of someone who understood the technical side of the recording process and the emotional side of the material. That's why Chuck was so valuable to him."

The conversation turns to "Woody, Bob, Bruce

and Dan." Bern wrote it a couple of years back after he had spent time in Okemah, Oklahoma, Guthrie's hometown: "I was on my way to the Woody Guthrie symposium in Cleveland [in September, 1996]. Woody was huge in the panoply of this, where I was going. It was like I was going to Woody's party. There were rumors that Dylan was going to show. Bruce was the big guy who was definitely going to be there. So the whole myth was on my mind. The whole Woody/Dylan thing is such an American myth, like a Greek God dying and passing along his magic touch. A lot of American myths are things that have really happened—but somehow they become our myths.

"The song was just a little comical thing," Bern explains. "I was feeling like, 'Well, I can't go and visit Woody, but I know where Bruce lives...' and just let the thing play its own self out. Like Bob has his 'Song to Woody,' so I have my song to Bruce. You know, just having fun with it. Then in Cleveland, Bruce did three songs—and man, it was just something so pure and astoundingly wonderful. Any time he opens his mouth, something just so right comes out. I've got just so much admiration for what he does and how he carries himself."

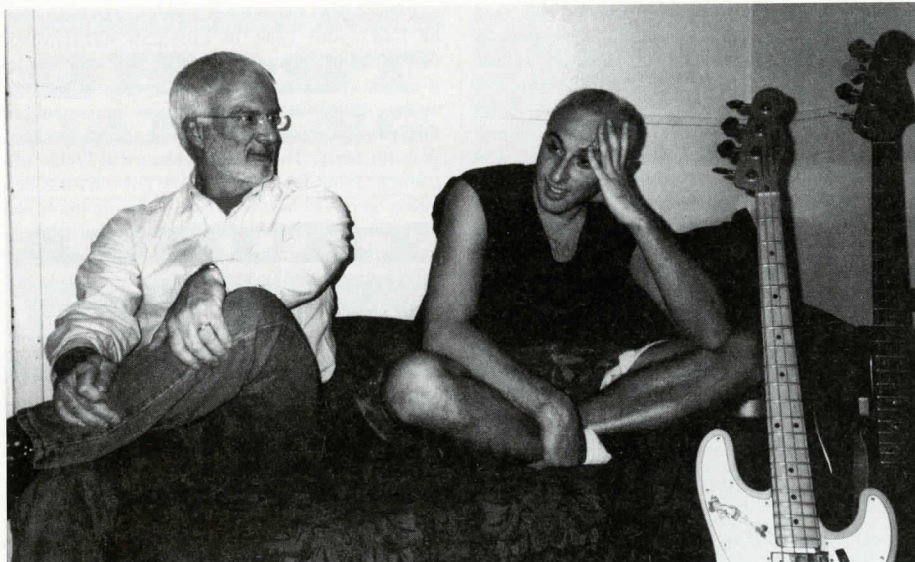
The weekend after the Asbury Park show, Bern plays the official record release concert for *Fifty Eggs* at the Bottom Line in New York City. It's the same club where, 23 years ago, Bruce celebrated the release of *Born To Run*. Sitting ringside, watching, listening intently, is Chuck Plotkin. I ask Chuck about his role as Dan's producer.

"I have some ideas, and sometimes they are pretty strong," Plotkin replies. "Sometimes they agree with his, and sometimes they don't. When they don't, he wins; he's the artist. It's about trying to help him do what he is trying to do. It's not about telling him what to do. Fundamentally, I believe that a producer's job is simply to help the artist deliver up—whole, live, and undistorted—their own thing, whatever it is that they are trying to get across. I suppose from time to time it seems like an important job to do, but mostly it's because it's easier for them to do *their* job if there is somebody around to trust who really gives a shit about what they are doing, and with whom they can talk, and argue, and discuss the process and how it's working. Really, it's their music. It's their songs, their singing, their playing. It's their vision.

"I know what's going to work for the microphones, the tape machines, limiters and compressors, equalizers and engineers," Plotkin continues. "I know what the [technical] issues are, but I also know the kinds of things that tend to expedite the process or slow the process down. What kinds of activities tend to result in manicured but de-energized recordings as opposed to vital recordings. It's about knowing how rough and raw it could be without it falling apart from being too loose; knowing how much energy can be spent trying to get something into line without killing the process."

Plotkin and Bern had the same perspective on striking that balance: "Dan brought a lot to the table in that respect because he's a great performer, and he knew that he didn't want to involve himself in some process that was going to drain all the vitality out of his music.... I think both of us tended to feel like, hey, if it feels real, if there's passion and energy and feeling in it... people aren't necessarily interested in a perfect rhythm track or a perfect arrangement. They are interested in something that serves up the song, full and alive."

Deep into the second Bottom Line set, Bern strums the opening notes of "Nebraska," and the house erupts. Bern vamps on the chords, the har-



Plotkin and Bern backstage at the Bottom Line, 4/4/98.

monica sounding like a distant warning siren. As the song seamlessly modulates into Bern's "Marina and Me," the ghosts reappear and make their presence known. The room goes pin-drop silent as Bern channels Lee Harvey Oswald, who tells his sad little pathetic story about a man who has big dreams but is frustrated by disappointments, delays, uncertainties and fears. Bern's delivery—in first-person narration, telling the story from behind the character's eyes much in the same way as Woody's "Pretty Boy Floyd" or Bruce's "Highway Patrolman"—is further evidence of Plotkin's influence as a producer.

"I said to Dan at some point or another, 'Look, you've been singing *about* these people. Don't sing about them—sing them,'" says Plotkin. "Once upon a time is fine for a book, but it's not fine for a song. It doesn't do what a song does. What a song does, it

completely fills the present moment. It has to live entirely in the present. It has to exclude: it has to fill the present so that any sort of neurotic inclination to escape into the past or the future is erased."

Backstage after the show, as a parade of well-wishers, record company people and fans meet and greet, Chuck and Dan speak about the evening's sets. Bern takes some time to talk with a singer, a ten-year-old boy he met at a folk festival earlier that week. The kid had gone home and recorded some of Dan's songs and two of his own on a cassette. Bern holds the tape like a precious jewel, listening carefully to the boy speak as if there were no one else in the room. I ask Chuck what is down the road for Bern, and where he sees Bern's place in the continuum of popular music for our time.

"The thing is, that's assuming a lot," replies Plotkin, "because it depends really on what Dan does. I feel like one of the measures of someone who works in pop culture is whether or not they can consolidate some vision of things which becomes compelling enough to sustain some connection with a reasonably wide audience over a reasonably long time. I think Dan has the capacity to do that. He is a great singer, a powerful presence on stage. At his best, he's as good a writer as exists right now. He writes as well as the best write, and he has all of the other gifts necessary to convey what he needs to convey to a listening audience. What he's going to decide to do with it? I've got my fingers crossed for all of us that he decides to do the most that he can."

"You can't just be a songwriter anymore," Plotkin maintains. "It's necessary but not sufficient. I think you can't even be just a *brilliant* songwriter anymore—which Dan clearly is. You have to be able to be a brilliant songwriter and have a compelling, coherent vision. That, more than anything else, I believe, is the thing that people come to you for. It may be delivered up in three- or four-minute segments... [but] it's what someone walks away from that experience with—sort of the residual of 15 or 20 things assembled correctly and delivered powerfully—that somebody takes home and is nourished and sustained by between shows or records. It's that thing that makes an artist most important in the culture to their audiences. And it's because the culture does lack a compelling coherent vision of what our lives are about that we need to escape that madness. To escape that madness what's needed is a compelling vision of our lives that can inform and ennoble and revitalize and sustain our lives. Transform our lives into something meaningful. That's what the best of them do. That's what Bob did in the '60s, what Bruce did in the '70s and '80s, and if Dan is up for it—if he is willing to pursue that, if he is willing to take that on—he can do it. I don't see anyone else on the horizon and haven't for some time." ➔

Talkin' Woody, Bob, Bruce and Dan Blues

Words and Music by Dan Bern

Well, when Woody Guthrie was sick and dyin'
Bob Dylan visited him as he was lyin'
In a hospital bed.
Bob sang him songs,
Woody smiled and said
I'm glad you've come.
Let me anoint you.
Go forth and be the voice of your generation.

Well, above Beverly Hills one night, real late,
I snuck past a security gate.
I parked by a Mercedes Benz,
Climbed up a barbed wire fence and over.
A couple of scratches,
But I made it
To the home of Bruce Springsteen.

Well, I found the Boss asleep in bed,
Pillows piled up around his head.
I turned on the light, took off my coat,
Stuck a thermometer down his throat,

Said Don't talk.
You look pale, Boss,
Not at all well.

I said you look bad and I asked him,
Could he think of us as Bob and Woody?
I said, You just rest your pretty head
As I sing to you in your hospital bed.
He said, What the hell you talking about?
I ain't sick, this ain't a hospital,
And how did you get past the security gate?

I said I wrote you a song called "Song to Bruce"
With a tune I stole from one of yours.
To his platinum records next I pointed,
Said I just want to be anointed.

"Springsteen, I wrote you a song
'Bout a funny old world that's comin' along,
Seems sick and it's tired, it's hard, and it's torn,
Who looks like he's dyin', and he's hardly been
born..."

He started really looking sick,
And I stopped singin'.

Well, Patti, his wife, came in, I said Geez,
I'm sorry about your husband's incurable disease.
I'm here to help any way I can.
You know, Woody and Bob, Bruce and Dan.

She looked a little worried and said
Honey, what am I hearing?
He said, Baby, you know I'm in the prime of life.

I said, Down to 2 million in sales this last time.
Read the signs, Patti.

He said, Some people think this record's my best.
I said, Shhhhh, you need your rest.
He said, There's a madman on the loose!
I said, Woody and Bob, Dan and Bruce.
So let me sit at the foot of your bed and sing songs, man.
Think of the stories I could tell later on.
He fought bravely to the end.
His last words were,
That was a good song Dan, wish I'd written it.

He sprang out of his bed and said,
All right, I heard enough of this stuff.
He grabbed my throat and dragged me hard
Down the hall and through the yard.
Surprising strength for a dying man.

He threw me out the way I'd come.
Barbed wire scraped my face and thumbs.
I've been thinking ever since:
Bob and Woody, Dan and the Artist
Formerly known as Prince,
Bob and Woody, Dan and Sting,
Dan and Madonna,
Bob and Woody,
Dan and Bob,
So long, Bel-Air...
Howdy, Malibu.

Lyrics reprinted permission of Dan Bern/Kababa Music

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

25 YEARS of RECORDED HISTORY

1976

January - February

Fresh off the *Born to Run* tour, Springsteen tops several year-end best-of lists, including Robert Hilburn's in the **January 11** issue of the *LA Times*: "Bruce Springsteen, whose powerful, passionate *Born to Run* album and fiery, sensual concert appearances summarized the pulse of the rock 'n' roll tradition so boldly and convincingly, was the pop artist of 1975. The album also reigns at the top of the year's ten best." Bruce and the E Streeters take a well-deserved break from a year on the road, as these first two months of the year go by with no shows. But everyone stays busy: Landau goes to L.A. to work on Jackson Browne's *The Pretender*; Roy Bittan records with David Bowie. Back in Asbury Park, Steve Van Zandt puts on his producer's hat and begins work on the first album from Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes. Jimmy Iovine, who engineered *Born to Run*, is also on board as engineer for the Jukes record, *I Don't Want To Go Home*.

In **February**, Ronnie Spector's association and friendship with Bruce and the band begins as Iovine calls her up and asks her to drop by the sessions. She does, meeting an awe-struck Bruce and dueting with Southside on the "You Mean So Much to Me," one of two songs Springsteen donates to the album, along with "The Fever."

It's during this period that rumors begin to circulate concerning the

emerging rift between Springsteen and Mike Appel. *Rolling Stone* writes that by **late February** Bruce is "reportedly entangled in a contractual fight with his manager." Appel tells the magazine, "It hasn't been ironed out, and I don't want to send out any misinformation." Springsteen visits Landau in L.A. and discusses his concerns. After reading the contracts Landau suggests seeing an attorney, and in a few weeks they go see attorney Michael Mayer in New York. Bruce has begun work writing and recording demos for his fourth album, but as time goes by—with a restless band—he makes plans to hit the road again.

March - May

At the beginning of March, Mayer contacts Laurel Canyon with a formal request of how much is owed Springsteen; Appel replies on **March 18**. The impact of *Born to Run* continues to keep Springsteen in the spotlight—the March issue of *Playboy* includes a feature, "The Ascension of Bruce Springsteen: From Zero to Sixty in Five Weeks Flat with Rock's Newest Superstar"—and beginning in late March, Bruce and the band maintain visibility as they embark on a two month tour. They rehearse for a small crowd at the Stone Pony on **March 21**. Before leaving, Springsteen contacts Mike Appel and Laurel Canyon again on **March 23**, in part to request payment, to inform them that the band would be on tour, and to name an interim financial officer to act in the meantime.

What is commonly known as the "Chicken Scratch" tour begins **March 25** in Columbia, SC. The oddly structured itinerary winds its way through the South—which has not traditionally been a strong market for

CLIFF BREINING PHOTO

PART TWO: 1976-1978

Bruce and Southside at the Stone Pony, Summer 1976



KENNY "MR. POPEYE" PENTIFALLO

The original Jukes drummer:

Bruce was having trouble with Appel, so rather than work any place for money that he'd have to pay him, Bruce would sit in with us and do Chuck Berry numbers. Max would sit in too, and Garry Tallent would be playing. When they cleared up the litigation and Bruce split, people wondered why he didn't take the Jukes with him—they thought we were his band! That's why it was so hard for us when our first album came out. People thought we were Springsteen clones.

I also remember we always used to have softball games between the Jukes and the E Streeters. Bruce really likes softball, and he played shortstop. One time he made this lateral dive to catch the ball, and when he landed, there was this big cloud of dust. Everybody went running over to make sure he was okay, and he was just yelling "get out of the way!" because he wanted to make the play!

—Interview by Robert Makin



Bruce at bat: one of the band's many softball games of the era, July 1976

the band—playing many college campuses and hitting a total of 32 cities in less than two months. Many of the shows do not sell out, but the tour is not without impressive stats: on **April 28**, Bruce and the E Street Band become the first rock 'n' roll act to play Nashville's Grand Ole Opry.

At the **April 29** Memphis gig, Eddie Floyd guests on "Knock on Wood" and "Raise Your Hand," after running through the songs with the band at that day's soundcheck. Talking with *Circus*, Floyd says, "I'm telling you, I was afraid that band would blow me off the stage. If it sounds that good up there, I'm sure it's even better down in the audience. I've heard a lot of bands in my day, but those six guys sound like 20 or 30." Springsteen says, "Man, when I got up there I have to say I knew those songs cold. I've been waiting to play those songs like that for ten years. *Ten years.*"

After the show, Springsteen and Miami Steve, along with publicist Glen Brunman, take a cab to Grace-land. As legend has it, Bruce jumps the stone wall in an attempt meet Elvis—only to be stopped by a security guard who says that Elvis is in Lake Tahoe. Bruce later tells the story to Ed Sciak: "I said, 'Well, if he comes back, tell him Bruce Springsteen...'" And he didn't know me from nobody, from Joe Schmo. I said, 'Listen, I was on *Time*, I was on *Newsweek*.' He said, 'Ah, sure, buddy. Well, listen, you gotta go outside now.' So he took me on down to the gate and just dumped me out, back onto the street."

The Municipal Auditorium performance in New Orleans—including Gary U.S. Bonds' "New Orleans"—brings the Chicken Scratch tour to a close on **May 13**. The very next day, **May 14**, Springsteen receives a check from Laurel Canyon—his first accounting since the beginning of their relationship. Springsteen wants to start recording soon and is working on "Frankie," a tune he debuted on the tour. After a couple of weeks off, Bruce and the band play two military academies on **May 27** and **28**. On **May 30**, Springsteen and several E Streeters join Southside Johnny and the Jukes to celebrate the release of their debut album with a

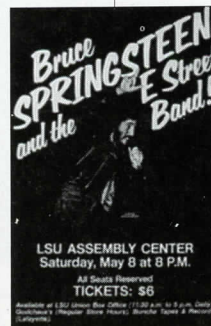
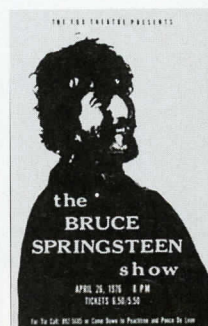
live concert broadcast at the Stone Pony. The Memorial Day show's "Havin' a Party" will be Bruce's last performance for two months.

June - July

Bruce—at odds with Appel—is decided on making a fourth studio record with Landau as producer. While in Los Angeles visiting Landau, who is still working with Browne, Bruce discusses recording soon. Landau estimates that his work on *The Pretender* will be done by July, and they plan on recording for four weeks during the summer. Bruce had planned to begin recording on **June 1**, but a year from that date will go by before work can finally commence.

Springsteen and Appel, who are not in close contact, continue to disagree on various other matters as well. Still wanting to avoid large venues, Bruce turns down a lucrative offer to headline a July 4 concert event at Giants Stadium. Also against Appel's advice, Springsteen rejects an offer to film an hour-long prime time special. Appel later tells *Backstreets*: "The William Morris Agency called me up and said that Bob Dylan had gotten into a fight involving an NBC special. He was going to be getting a million dollars. So they called and asked me about Bruce doing it. So I asked if we could get a million and a half... It was an incredible deal. Dylan fell through, so I ended up with Springsteen doing it. But it never came to pass because Springsteen and Landau didn't want to do it. So that was nixed."

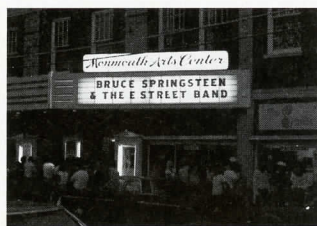
On **July 2**, Mike Appel sends a letter saying that having Jon Landau as Springsteen's producer would violate the terms of his contract. The letter states, "Unless we receive assurances that our contractual rights are being honored... and that Mr. Landau's interference with those rights will not be permitted, we shall be compelled to take legal action." Mike Appel later tells Marc Eliot: "The last contact I had with Bruce before the lawsuit came in the **middle of July** 1976. Bruce, unbeknownst to me, was staying at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel in Los Angeles with the band. I happened to be in L.A. on separate business and had made reservations at the same hotel. My relationship



with Bruce was, for all intents and purposes, nonexistent at this time. For about three months, I'd had nothing to do with Bruce Springsteen's life whatsoever. As far as I knew, he was on the road, and I was considered off limits by anyone associated with him. I happened to walk out to the back patio where the pool is, with my wife, and there's Bruce and the band.... The reason they all looked so guilty, I realized later, was that Bruce had already signed off on the lawsuit. I was served three days later." On **July 27**, Springsteen files suit in Federal Court in Manhattan against Mike Appel and Laurel Canyon for fraud, undue influence and breach of trust, among several causes of action; Appel is fired the same day. Two days later, on **July 29**, Appel files a countersuit in New York State Supreme Court, asking the court to prohibit Springsteen and Landau from working together in the studio

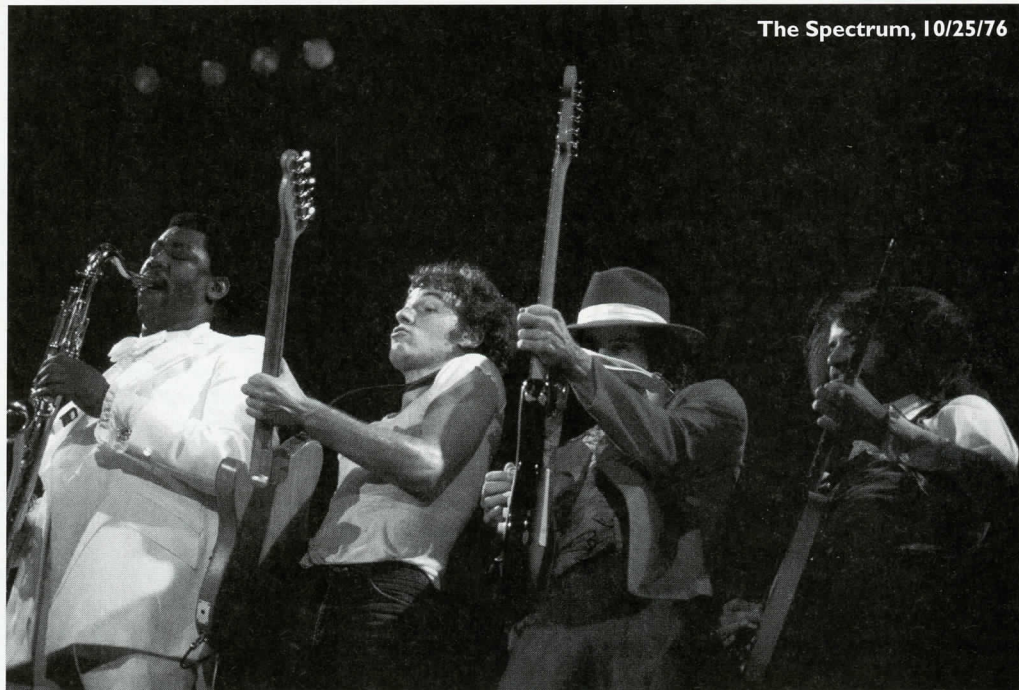
August

The first week of the month, **August 1-3 and 5-7**, Springsteen and the band play a series of six nights at Monmouth Arts Center in Red Bank, NJ. Mike Appel tries to stop the shows with a request for a civil order, which is denied. The Red Bank shows essentially mark the beginning of the second 1976 tour, as the Miami Horns are added to the E Street lineup for shows through the remainder of the year and into 1977. **August 1** includes the premiere of "Something in the Night" and "Rendezvous." On **August 3**, Bruce debuts "The Promise," which, especially considering the timing, would seem to relate directly to the lawsuit, though Bruce later maintains, "I wrote it before there was a lawsuit. I



don't write songs about lawsuits."

The first court hearing occurs shortly after the Red Bank stand, on **August 9**. Judge Arnold L. Fein awards a preliminary injunction against Springsteen recording with Jon Landau. As Laurel Canyon's lawyer, Leonard Marks, told Marc Eliot, "Basically what Judge Fein said was that no one could force Springsteen to record with someone he didn't want to record with, but they could stop him with anybody who wasn't designated by Laurel Canyon. In other words, the keys to the jail were essentially in Springsteen's own pocket." According to Fein's decision, "The real issue appears to be whether



The Spectrum, 10/25/76

Landau may act as the producer over the plaintiff's objection. Landau has no rights under these agreements."

The **August 14** *Melody Maker* makes no mention of the troubles, and actually reports that Springsteen will be entering the studio shortly with Landau. The magazine names "Frankie" and "Darkness on the Edge of Town" as two songs already written for the album, which, they optimistically report, "should be finished by the end of September." With an appeal process underway, Springsteen continues to give depositions over the coming weeks; in the midst of this legal turmoil, Bruce and the band play a show on **August 21** at the Palace Theatre in Waterbury, CT.

September - December

Bruce joins Southside at the Stone Pony once again for "Havin' a Party" on **September 4**. A second court hearing occurs on **September 15** and is a huge blow to Springsteen, as Judge Fein's original injunction regarding Landau is upheld. Recording plans firmly stymied, Bruce and the band go back on the road, with booking agent Barry Bell steering the ship as best he can. After the warm-up shows in August, the second 1976 tour kicks into full gear with Bruce's first sports arena show on **September 26** at the 7500-seat Veterans Memorial Coliseum in Phoenix, AZ. From here they head to California and then back east for a solid itinerary through early November. In **October**, during the course of the tour, Bruce switches his legal representation to Peter Parcher, which marks the beginning of a turnaround; rumors of a settlement soon begin to circulate.

On **October 25**, Bruce and the boys play the Spectrum in Philadelphia after a notoriously intensive soundcheck. "What he found out," as Bell later tells Dave Marsh, "was that you could get good sound in a big hall—if you were willing to make the effort." The Spectrum shows, Bruce's first as a headliner at an East Coast arena, don't strike most Springsteen followers as a sell-out, even after all the talk about not playing big venues: It is clear that Springsteen and the band are completely ready for them, and these shows simply mark the end of an era. The arena is also "roped-down" for these concerts, making the venue seem smaller and improving both sound and intimacy. The following night's Spectrum concert is postponed one day until **October 27**, as Clarence is filming a cameo appearance for the film *New York, New York*.

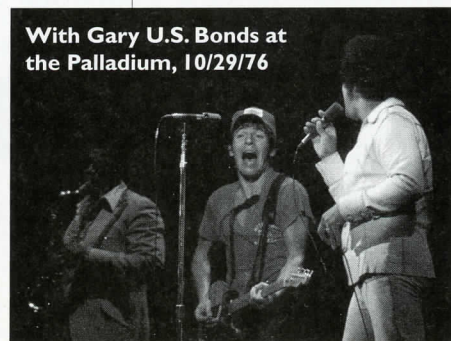
The tour ends with a multiple night stand at the Palladium, **October 28-30 and November 2-4**. In the *New York Times* John Rockwell writes, "Bruce Springsteen's concerts at the Palladium, starting Thursday, will mark his first New York appearances since the publicity blitz of a

year ago.... Some anti-Springsteeni-ans have suggested that Mr. Springsteen has been 'spooked' by all the attention he received.... But as far as one can tell, it hasn't been excessive publicity that's hurt Mr. Springsteen so much as circumstances and a nasty managerial battle. Reports from his recent West Coast tour suggest that his live shows are better than ever.... In the meantime, Mr. Springsteen isn't making his record, and his millions of fans are being denied the opportunity to hear him, except through his occasional, impossible-to-get-into concerts. Mr. Springsteen, speaking recently from California, professed confidence that the court suits would be settled and that he would make the record. 'If Jon [Landau] can't do it, I'll probably do it myself, after the Palladium concerts,' Mr. Springsteen said. 'To tell you the truth, I don't worry about it very much. It's gonna come around.... One way or another, there'll be a record, without compromising the quality of the music.'"

The Palladium shows include several notable guests. On **October 29**, "Quarter to Three" features Gary U.S. Bonds playing with Springsteen



With Gary U.S. Bonds at the Palladium, 10/29/76



The Mystery of the Miami Horns

BY MIKE SAUNDERS

By the middle of 1976, in a legal stalemate with recording plans postponed indefinitely, Bruce hit the road again and performed over 60 shows from coast to coast. Several of these—New York Palladium 1976, Boston Music Hall 1977—count among his finest-ever performances. Now clean-shaven and with shorter hair, Bruce presented a similarly tighter, more streamlined show with a revamped set list, a new lighting design and a large number of previously-unheard original songs and covers (among them “Rendezvous,” “The Promise,” “Don’t Look Back,” “We Gotta Get Outta This Place” and “Higher and Higher”) which have been played rarely, if at all, since. These concerts represent a period of transition for Bruce, and provide an important, though less publicized, link between the historic *Born To Run* and *Darkness* tours.

The 1976/77 “lawsuit shows” were also notable for the presence of the Miami Horns. Although Bruce had experimented with the use of horns as far back as 1971, this was the first time he’d taken a full-size horn section on the road with the E Street Band. They were named, of course, after Miami Steve Van Zandt, whose natural flair for arranging had proved invaluable during the recording of the horn parts for “Tenth Avenue Freeze-out” in the summer of 1975.

Although he became a full-time member of the E Street Band that year, Steve continued to lead an exhausting double life as singer, guitarist, songwriter, producer, arranger and manager for the horn-heavy Jukes from 1976 to 1978. Van Zandt worked with Southside and company whenever the gaps in Bruce’s increasingly busy schedule allowed it. The three albums he made with the Jukes during this time are rightly regarded as classics, as is “Say Goodbye To Hollywood,” the 1977 single he produced for Ronnie Spector and the E Street Band. It’s more than likely that Miami Steve’s work with the Asbury Jukes influenced Bruce’s decision to include a horn section on the 1976/77 tours, and that he was involved in creating horn parts for the likes of “Action In The Streets,” “Rosalita” and “Raise Your Hand” among others, adding a new dimension to the E Street wall of sound.

Over the years, the general assumption has been that Bruce borrowed Southside’s Miami Horns for the lawsuit shows, and that they were the same musicians who played on the first Jukes album, *I Don’t Want to Go Home*, namely Deacon Earl Gardner (trumpet), Rick Gazda (trumpet), Bob Malach (sax), Bill Zacagni (sax) and Louis Parente (trombone). However, closer investigation reveals that there were two entirely separate sets

of Miami Horns operating during this period—one with the E Street Band, the other with the Asbury Jukes. With the exception of Rick Gazda, none of the above musicians were included in either lineup. To explain fully, we need to backtrack a little.

In January 1976, Miami Steve came off the *Born to Run* tour determined to secure a record deal for the Asbury Jukes, who had just begun their second year as house band at the Stone Pony in Asbury Park. At the time, the Jukes horn section consisted of just one permanent member, sax player Carlo Novi. “We tried gettin’ horn players; they’d come and go. We could never get the ones we wanted,” Southside said in 1991. A bunch of high school kids were drafted to provide horn accompaniment during the recording of a four-

formed, comprising Carlo Novi (sax), Ed Manion (sax), Tony Palligrosi (trumpet) and Rick Gazda (trumpet). This line-up eventually grew into a five-piece with the arrival of charismatic trombone player Richie “La Bamba” Rosenberg in November.

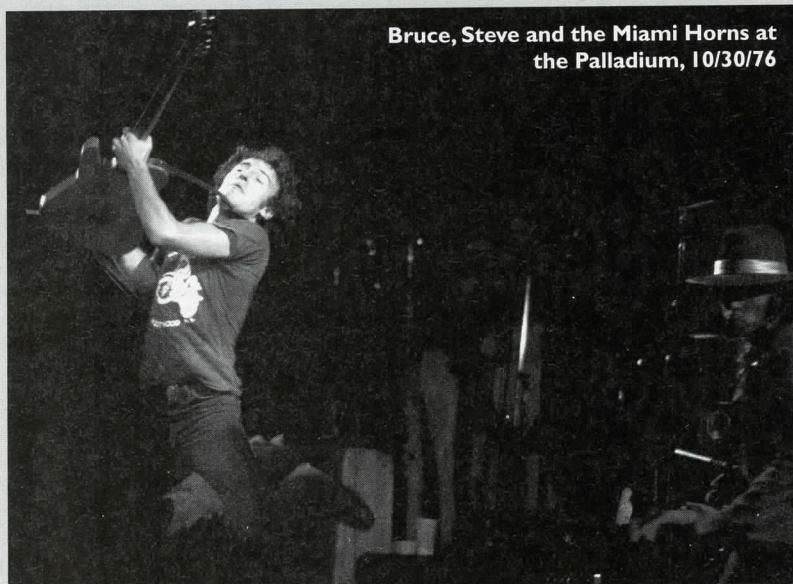
In the summer of 1976, the Asbury Jukes ended their Stone Pony residency and began to tour nationally. In July, they performed at the CBS convention in Los Angeles, where Bruce joined them onstage for a version of “I Don’t Want To Go Home.” Shortly afterwards, Southside picked up a throat virus which rendered him temporarily speechless and caused the cancellation of numerous dates. With Southside and the band temporarily off the road, Bruce borrowed the Novi/Manion/Palligrosi/Gazda Miami Horns for his

August shows in Red Bank and the Palace Theater in Waterbury, CT. Ed Manion once said that the Jukes horns “toured” with the E Street Band, suggesting that there may have been other shows around this time that are still unknown. This theory is given further weight by Tony Palligrosi, who remembers also playing with Bruce at the Hartford Civic Center in 1976.

By the time Bruce began his fall tour in Phoenix, AZ, on September 26, Southside was fully recovered, the Jukes had resumed their punishing 200-gigs-a-year schedule, and an entirely separate Miami Horns had to be formed to accompany

the E Street Band on the road. During an interview with Richard Neer of WNEW-FM in New York on November 6, Bruce confirmed, “Yeah, the Miami Horns played with us in Red Bank, [but] these cats are from Philly, [they’re] friends of the Asbury Jukes horn section.”

Bruce continued to mention the Philadelphia connection when introducing the Miami Horns on his 33-show winter 1977 tour, but always stopped short of naming the individual musicians. Because they only appeared onstage for a handful of songs each night, photographs which include the horn section are comparatively rare, but those that do exist reveal that the E Street Miami Horns consisted of one sax, one trombone and two trumpet players. This corresponds exactly with a March 1977 *Boston Evening Globe* review which identified the musicians as Ed De Palma (sax), Dennis Orlock (trombone), John Benkley (trumpet) and Steve Paraczky (trumpet). While it’s certainly possible that the 1977 horn section differed partly or even completely from the fall 1976 line-up, it’s reasonably safe to assume that these four cats from Philly accompanied the E Street Band on both tours.

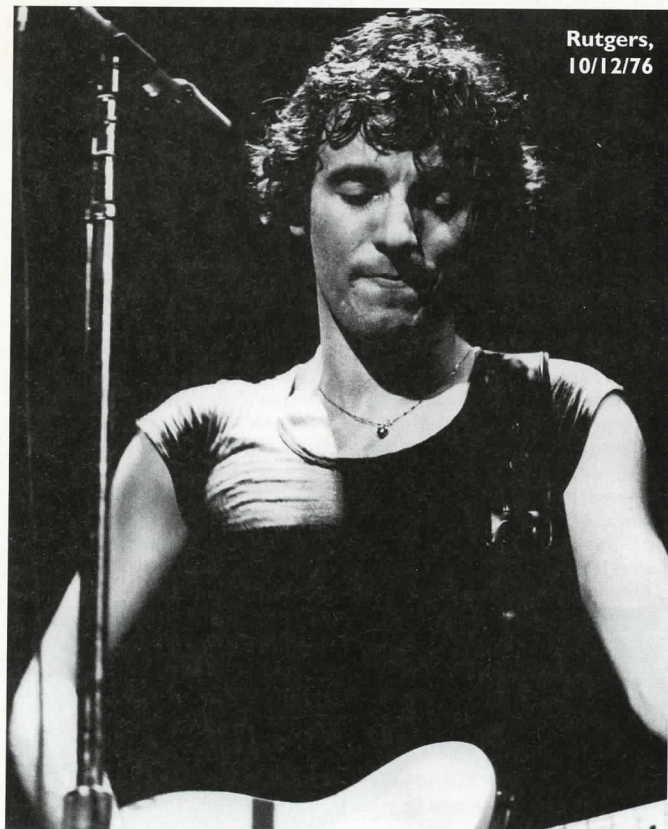


Bruce, Steve and the Miami Horns at the Palladium, 10/30/76

song demo tape for circulation to record companies. “They were scared to death. Steven was great with them. He taught ‘em all the parts. They wrote it all out, and they did the best they could.”

Before too long, a verbal agreement was reached with Epic, but the finalizing of contracts was likely to take several weeks. With producer Miami Steve committed to another E Street Band tour beginning March 25, the band somehow scraped together enough cash to finance the recording of their debut album by themselves, once again using a bunch of hired hands as a temporary horn section: the Gardner/Gazda/Malach/Zacagni/Parente line-up. This original incarnation of the Miami Horns went their separate ways once the backing tracks for the album had been laid down (though Rick Gazda returned three months later to join the Jukes on a full-time basis, and Bob Malach made a brief comeback in early 1977 to play a solo on the band’s second album, *This Time It’s For Real*).

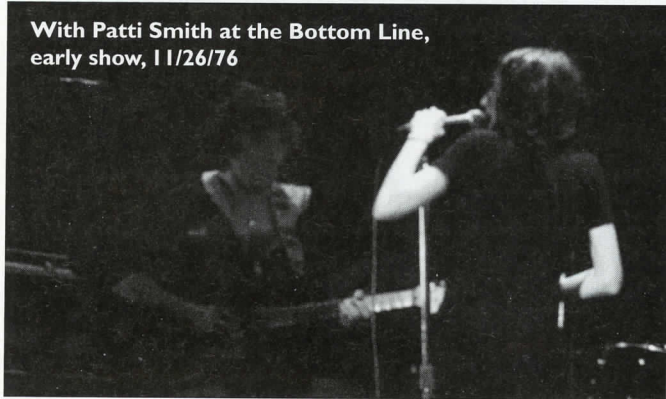
By Memorial Day, when the Jukes celebrated the imminent release of *I Don’t Want To Go Home* with a famous showcase gig at the Stone Pony, a permanent Asbury Jukes horn section had been

Rutgers,
10/12/76

and the band for the first time, with Bruce looking positively thrilled. **October 30** finds another future Boss beneficiary onstage as Patti Smith joins in on "Rosalita." This is also Smith's first time to play with Bruce, and most of the crowd is completely unaware of who she is—it appears she just stepped up out of the crowd. (Before the end of the year, Bruce will join Patti on piano and guitar for a number of songs at her Bottom Line shows.) Ronnie Spector guests on **November 4** at the Palladium on a three-song Ronettes medley. This final night of the tour is later broadcast on Boston's WCOZ.

With a few months off from touring, the rest of the E Street Band records two songs with Ronnie Spector, "Say Goodbye to Hollywood" and "Baby Please Don't Go." The impromptu session comes about when Van Zandt has the space

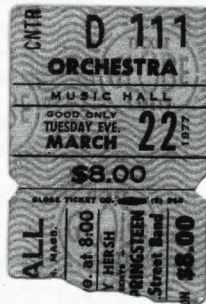
reserved at CBS Studios in Manhattan to record the Jukes' second album—and the Jukes themselves are out on the road. Meanwhile, the legal battle continues. On **December 8**, in an important affidavit, Springsteen requests that he be allowed to record with Landau as producer, if the result would be placed in the court's possession until the trial is over. His request is denied, but the affidavit will pay off later: It details Springsteen's reasons for wanting to work with Landau, as someone who contributes to the creative process and is less concerned with monetary interests. "My interest is my career," Bruce says in the affidavit, "which up until now holds the promise of my being able to significantly contribute to, and possibly influence, a generation of music. No amount of money could compensate me if I were to lose this opportunity."

With Patti Smith at the Bottom Line,
early show, 11/26/76

1977

January - March

Manfred Mann's Earth Band's cover of Bruce's "Blinded By the Light" spends the first three months of the year in the Top 40, where it reaches number one. Springsteen himself has yet to do the same with any of his own songs. With the lawsuit continuing into the new year—on **January 20** Springsteen's appeal is dismissed—and Bruce still unable to record, what else is there to do but go back on tour? Touring is also the only way for Springsteen to make money, pay the band and keep them together. A 30-city itinerary begins on **February 7** at the Palace Theatre in Albany, NY. The 1977 tour once again includes the Miami Horns and features new songs—though songs that will be out of the running by the time the fourth album is eventually released. "Action in the Streets" debuts on the second night, **February 8**, in Rochester, with the Miami Horns in full effect. Bruce and the E Streeters swing through Canada and back down into Ohio, where Ronnie Spector joins the band in Cleveland on **February 17**. After three solidly packed weeks of shows, they return to Ohio where "Don't Look Back" debuts on **March 10** in Toledo. On **March 22**, Bruce wins an important motion in court, and settlement became a real possibility for the first time in the eight months since the lawsuits began. That night Springsteen plays the first of four nights in Boston. The tour climaxes with these legendary **March**



22-25 concerts at Music Hall, regarded as some of the finest in Bruce's career. Though the actual settlement may be still two months away, Bruce must finally see an end in sight: the performances are an exuberant celebration. Even if most of the audience is unaware of his impending freedom, it's clear that *something* special is happening as Bruce takes these shows—and the crowd—"Higher and Higher." That Jackie Wilson classic makes several rare appearances in Boston, providing the final moment of the thrilling **March 25** show and of the 1977 tour.

April - May

While Bruce and the band have been performing for audiences nearly non-stop, the lack of a new record on the shelves hasn't gone unnoticed. In the **April** issue of *Creem*, an article entitled "Bruce Springsteen's Longest Season" covers Springsteen's hiatus with much talk of backlash—describing the rock press' "lavish praise" as "premature ejaculation," and pondering Springsteen as having had his 15 minutes of fame. Still, the article winds up with its own lavish (and prophetic) praise, as Robert Duncan writes: "Someday all the legal crap will be over (if it isn't by the time you read this). And someday he'll make the best rock 'n' roll album of all time. It may not be the next one or the one after, but someday. He can wait. I can wait. We have no choice. This man is the first rock 'n' roll musician I've ever met or read about or heard about or anything that could be a rock 'n' roll musician the rest of his life and still come up with something great when he's 70...."

The Ronnie Spector/E Street Band single is released this month, around the same time as Southside and the

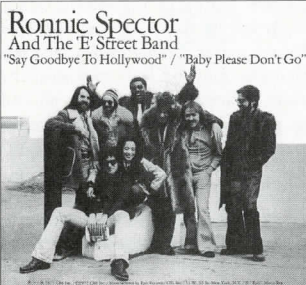
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Jukes', *This Time It's For Real*—on which Spector is listed as "First lady of rock 'n' roll and queen of the E Street Kings." This second album for the Jukes includes three songs co-written by Springsteen and Van Zandt: "Little Girl So Fine," "Love on the Wrong Side of Town," and "When You Dance."

On April 17, Bruce takes the stage at the Stone Pony during a Jukes set,

including a lead-vocal turn on "The Fever." Bruce has the chance to step in again with the Jukes a few weeks later at Monmouth Arts Center in Red Bank, NJ, on May 12 and 13, when Southside Johnny is too ill to perform at the Jukes' special homecoming concerts. Ken Viola writes, "Miami Steve made a quick decision and a few phone calls. 'Everything,' he said in his usual nonchalant manner, 'will be all right.'" Miami Steve's response was to put together "The Asbury All-Star Revue," featuring himself and the Jukes, Ronnie Spector, Bruce and the E Street Band. Of the May 12 show Viola writes, "When the lights finally dimmed at midnight, you could sense magic in the air. And when Marc Brickman, the amazing lighting designer, hit that first spot, you knew this time it was for real. The Asbury Jukes were on stage fronted by two familiar

faces. In black leather pants and silver-studded belt was Miami Steve; to his right was the Boss himself, Bruce Springsteen, gripping his guitar, grinning, decked out in a Hawaiian print shirt that was maybe a size too big. It was obvious to the enthusiastic fans that though Southside was ill, his Asbury Park friends were going to come to the rescue and attempt to salvage the evening (and the two shows the following night)...." In addition to the climactic E Street Band set, these shows also include Springsteen's only duet with Spector on "You Mean So Much to Me."

Two weeks later, at 3 a.m. on May 28, Springsteen and Appel agree to settle out of court, ending a 15-month ordeal. Though the exact terms of the settlement remain undisclosed, both parties are reportedly happy with the outcome. Springsteen later tells Ed Sciaky,

"Yeah, it's finished, it's done, and it worked out for the best, in my mind." With the settlement, Springsteen now controls his own future music publishing and recordings, and has a new contract with CBS. Best of all, though he has lost a lot of time, he is at last free to record the follow-up to *Born to Run* with Jon Landau.

June - August

Springsteen wastes no time; within a matter of days, on June 1, he finally enters the studio—with Landau producing—to record his fourth album. The sessions, which include Iovine again as engineer, begin at Atlantic Studios in New York, NY. This first day is spent recording demos of numerous songs already written, including "The Promise," "Something in the Night," "Frankie," "Rendezvous," "Darkness on the Edge of Town," and "Don't Look

VIN SCELSA

New York radio legend who emceed many Bruce shows in the late '70s:

There was this show in Red Bank at what is now the Count Basie Theater. It was supposed to be a Southside Johnny show. But Southside got sick, so the Asbury All-Stars performed. It was Bruce and Little Steven—I guess he was still Miami Steve back then—and all the Jukes and the E Street Band. I was going to emcee, so I was wandering around backstage and was told what was going on. It was going to be exciting, but there was this other guy from a local radio station. Somebody told him he was going to emcee. I wasn't interested in causing a commotion. I just wanted to see the show, because it came as a complete surprise: nobody knew Bruce was going to come out and do the show.

So I started to leave. I saw Steven, and he stopped me. He said, "I thought you were introducing us?" So I told him about this other guy. He said, "Wait a minute," and he grabbed me and took me to the dressing room to explain the situation to Bruce. Bruce sits back in this chair like the Godfather, nodding his head, listening. I really felt like I was in a scene from *The Godfather*, and Steven was the consiglieri. Bruce is going, "Uh-huh. Uh-huh." I was like, "Bruce, it's no big deal. I'll go out front." Bruce says, "You're going to introduce us. Steven, take care of it."

So I'm set to do the introduction. Bruce says he'll look at me and nod when they're ready. There's this tension in the audience, this excitement in the air. They didn't know exactly what was going on, but they knew something was up. It was a big deal that they were all going to go out onstage together. I'm a big enough fan of these guys to be totally blown away by the fact that they're doing this. I never became jaded with those guys. I always felt—even though we were all peers—it was incredibly exciting and a privilege to be onstage with them.

The combination of both bands was like 24 musicians. They plugged in their guitars in total darkness and there was this roar from the crowd. Bruce nods. I leaned into the microphone and said, "Johnny's sick tonight. He's not going to be able to make it." And it ended up with me saying, "Ladies and gentlemen, the Asbury All-Stars." There's Bruce and Steven standing there. The house blew up. Not only was it Bruce and Steven, but all the Jukes and the E Street guys. There was a friendship thing happening. Johnny was ill, and everybody was filling in for him. That was a pretty exciting night.

—Interview by Robert Makin



Boston Music Hall, 3/24/77

CLIFF BREINING PHOTO

Back." There are many unreleased songs from this period, as Bruce essentially had to skip over what would have been a record release. Though he and the band commit many to tape, the backlog of songs isn't what he wants to convey by the time he is able to construct a fourth album. *The Aquarian* writes that "each night, beginning at close to 1 a.m., Bruce and his band have taken over the studio's main recording room, working as a unit, strapped in 'live,' blasting through the too-many tunes that Bruce has kept inside his head during all the difficulties...."

Other songs recorded early in the sessions are "Fire" and "Because the Night," which he'll give away; "Drive All Night" and "Sherry Darling," which will be saved for the next album; "Candy's Boy" and "The Fast Song," which will eventually merge into the fourth album's "Candy's Room." Finding Atlantic Studios uncomfortable and unhappy with the drum sound there, Springsteen and the rest soon move the sessions back to *Born to Run* territory: the Record Plant, studio B. On **July 13-14**, New York City experiences a 48-hour blackout. After a few power surges in the studio, the lights go out. Assistant engineer Gray Russell—at the time working elsewhere in the studios—later recalls: "We obviously didn't know whether the lights would stay out for ten minutes, or a half hour, or three hours or three days. So we all sat around. Bruce and the E Street Band were working in studio B, and everyone in studio B also came out and we all stayed in the lobby at the Record Plant, talking and relaxing. Some people, Bruce and others, were playing guitars...." Reporting on the lawsuit settlement in the **July 14th** issue, *Rolling Stone* reports that the new Springsteen album is expected before the end of the year. By **August**, the band is working on early versions of "Adam Raised a Cain," "Factory," and "Prove It All Night," all with unfinished lyrics.

September - December

Recording for what will be *Darkness on the Edge of Town* continues in earnest at the Record Plant. Other names considered for the album are *Badlands* (scrapped when Billy Chin-nock releases his album by that name), *Racing in the Street*, *American Madness*, and Landau's suggestion, *History is Made at Night*. While Springsteen didn't take the stage over the summer, during the fall he makes several Stone Pony appearances: on **September 4**, he jams on two songs with the Shots; on **September 13**, he joins Southside for two songs at a Pony benefit, followed by a short E Street band set; he plays with the Jukes again on **October 13**.

Columbia had hoped to have the album in time for Christmas, but as November comes and goes it's clear that the release will be delayed. Springsteen had decided in the early fall that he wanted a cleaner, more straightforward sound for the new record and wanted to re-record many of the songs; he's also still constantly making new song selections. Among the songs recorded during this period are "Independence Day," "Breakout," "Preacher's Daughter," and "The Ice-man." With the album release pushed back, work on the record will continue into the next year. December finds Bruce back on stage a few more times. He sings "Heartbreak Hotel" with Robert Gordon (to whom he will give "Fire") on **December 2**. Bruce performs his "Because the Night" for the first time live on **December 30**, with Patti Smith at CBGB's.

The following night, **December 31**, with Southside Johnny and the Jukes ringing in the New Year at the Capitol Theatre in Passaic, NJ, Bruce and the E Street Band join in. The concert is broadcast on WNEW, and Ken Viola later covers the show in *Thunder Road*: "...when, at the stroke of midnight at the Capitol—after a torrid opening set of numbers of Messrs. Lyon and Van Zandt



Billy Smith recently acquired this artwork, from a source saying these were early cover mock-ups for the fourth album, under the working title of *Badlands*.

backed by the Jukes, Miami Horns and second drummer Mighty Max Weinberg—Bruce Springsteen bounced out on the stage with ripped t-shirt and squirting a champagne bottle, it was cause to *really* celebrate. What followed was a loose, fun version of Sam Cooke's 'Havin' a Party.' The rest of the party at the Capitol continued on stage as various members of the E Street Band floated in and out of the band.... [After the encores] the audience went wild and, after the entire troupe had bid all a Happy New Year, churned up such excitement that the entire group of

musicians came back out to perform 'Higher and Higher.' The lights came up, the fans lifted themselves out of their seats, and—for the first time in nine months—Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band, just for fun, took to the stage. The Boss screamed: 'Are you ready? Are you ready to get loose? Are you ready to get crazy? I'm crazy already!' Springsteen then plunged into 'Little Latin Lupe Lu,' 'You Can't Sit Down,' and finally—to bid goodnight (or morning)—'Backstreets,' 'Born to Run,' and 'Quarter to Three.' 1977 was over. 1978 had begun."

JOHN SCHER

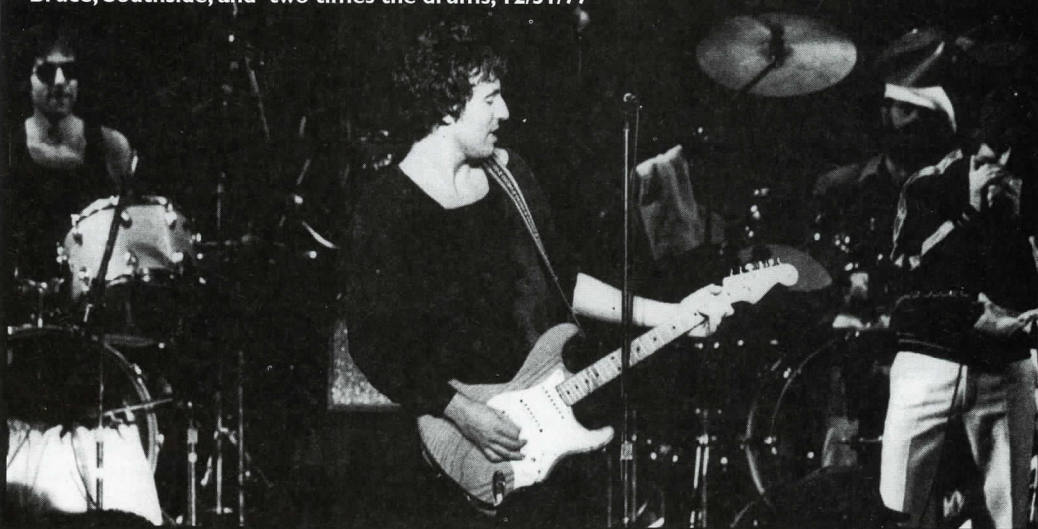
Owner of Metropolitan Entertainment, which promotes many venues throughout the Northeast. Scher promoted Bruce Springsteen concerts from 1970 to 1985:

At the Capitol Theater—before Bruce's three-night stand there in 1978—there was a famous show that Southside Johnny headlined, the previous New Year's Eve. The show was over around 1 a.m. It was live on WNEW, and Richard Neer was backstage signing off. Bruce's road manager came and grabbed me and said Bruce wanted to talk to me. Bruce said, "Me and the boys want to play a little more. Okay?"

I remember, I ran back onstage, and about two-thirds of the audience already had left. I got on the mic and said, "Don't anybody go anywhere. Give us 10 minutes to put the set back together, and the E Street Band is going to come out to play." The security guys sent the ushers into the streets to get the people to come back. Neer signed back on the air at 1:15 a.m., and the band went back on and played for another half hour.

—Interview by Robert Makin

Bruce, Southside, and two times the drums, 12/31/77



JOHN WOODING PHOTO

Journey Into Fear

Top Ten Outtakes, 1976-1978

BY ARLEN SCHUMER

When Bruce Springsteen recorded "Born to Run"—the song that a panel of British music critics recently voted the greatest rock song of all time—he was exactly the same age as Orson Welles when Welles directed *Citizen Kane*, the American Film Institute's recent pick for greatest motion picture of all time. What does a 25-year-old artist do after creating not just a masterpiece, but arguably the greatest work in its medium?

The artist goes on to create smaller-scaled, individual works that it is hoped will stand outside the long shadow cast by that masterpiece. Welles went on to direct a variety of idiosyncratic, off-beat, challenging films—1943's *The Magnificent Ambersons*, the '58 film noir *Touch of Evil*—that have since been reconsidered by critics as great films in their own right, some defining examples of their genre. Much like Springsteen's output in the songs recorded for *Darkness on the Edge of Town*. These outtakes, performed and recorded from 1976-1978, run the gamut from love songs and ballads to power-pop and classic rock 'n' roll, many becoming defining hits for the artists who covered them.

1. FIRE

This is the perfect example of an outtake that went on to become widely known through its cover versions—by Robert Gordon, the Pointer Sisters, and Robin Williams' Elmer Fudd impression. Just this year, Des'ree and Babyface have rerecorded the song. Yet the original demo by Bruce—supposedly on its way to Graceland when Elvis died—remains the best, longest, and most exciting version of the song, even better than Bruce's own live performances later on the *Darkness* tour. Three elements distinguish the demo from the live versions that followed: the echoey organ (not piano) that dominates the sound; the emphasis on the off-beat throughout the song; and Bruce's twangy, Duane Eddy guitar solo that typifies the great guitar work found in so many outtakes. "Fire" could justifiably be called one of Bruce's greatest hits—and it might've saved Elvis' life.

2. BECAUSE THE NIGHT

Like the opening bass guitar chords of "Fire," the introductory piano of "Because the Night" is as mesmerizing as anything Bruce has written. Unlike "Fire," "Because the Night" reached its zenith not in the demo version (given to Patti Smith lyrically unfinished), but in Bruce's incendiary *Darkness* tour performances. The definitive one is from 9/19/78, bootlegged as *Pièce de Résistance*. The guitar solo there ranks as one of Bruce's greatest, the song as one of his greatest love songs: "Because the night... belongs to lovers."

3. FRANKIE

Practically all the outtakes here are love songs, but they're tougher love songs that rock. The most prominent is "Frankie," a shimmering, soulful song with an unexpected sax solo that soars at the end. Oddly, a seemingly finished version was played on the "lawsuit tour," while the common studio outtake recorded afterward has incomplete lyrics. A more languid version of "Frankie" was recorded for *Born in the USA* and apparently even considered for 1995's *Greatest Hits*.

4. RENDEZVOUS

"Rendezvous," like "Frankie," debuted live in '76 before it was recorded—with the Palladium, 11/4/76, as my favorite take, available on *We Gotta Get Outta This Place*. A great example of Springsteen applying himself to a particular sub-genre—what became known in the post-punk era as "power pop"—and crafting a perfect little gem

that sounds both classic (hearkening back to the British Invasion) and fresh. Though later recorded by Greg Kihn and Gary U.S. Bonds, it is Bruce's version that remains quintessential.

5. I WANNA BE WITH YOU

This is another power-pop love song with muscle, the kind of song that John (Cougar) Mellencamp would later build an entire career around. But Bruce would discard it for the oft-cited reason that it didn't fit in with the heavier, serious tone of *Darkness*.

6. GOIN' BACK

A wild, reckless Bo Diddley-style workout that features blistering harmonica and dirty sax, "Goin' Back" demonstrates the band's tightness live in the studio, even when they're cutting loose. As in most of the outtakes, Bruce lets the band rock out, whereas on the released *Darkness* tracks, Bruce, by his own admission, "oversang," and the band "underplayed."

7. PREACHER'S DAUGHTER

Perhaps Bruce left this song off *Darkness* because of its similarity, musically, to "She's the One." "Preacher's Daughter" slowly smolders for a couple of verses like "She's the One" before Bruce busts it wide open with one of the most explosive vocal tracks he's ever laid down. Lyrically, the song seems to pay homage to Chuck Berry's "Maybelline," with its title the name of a drag racing car, while the conflict involving "two boys bloody over what I don't know" echoes years later in "My Hometown." Inexplicably, this song is not on E. St.'s *The Definitive Darkness Outtakes Collection* like all the others, but it can be found on *The Iceman*.

8. HEARTS OF STONE

About ten years ago in *Time* magazine, Jay Cocks called New Jersey sons Frank Sinatra and Bruce Springsteen (not Elvis!) America's two greatest popular singers. *Hearts of Stone*, which Bruce gave to Southside Johnny (becoming the title track for his greatest album), would not be out of place on a Sinatra record. The couplet, "I can't talk now, I'm not alone/So put your ear close to the phone," is a beauty, and Bruce's vocals on this ballad are heartfelt and stirring.

9. JANEY NEEDS A SHOOTER

Possibly the only song that can be spoken of in the same breath as "Backstreets" for its intensity, passion and power, "Janey Needs a Shooter" is also similar in structure: from a searing guitar solo and Bruce's repetition of the final line, "The way that I know her style," to a mounting, thunderous climax that the E Street Band plays more powerfully than anything before or since. This version of "Janey" is light years away from both the ballad-style track recorded when Bruce wrote the song in 1972, and Warren Zevon's take, retitled "Jeannie Needs a Shooter," released in 1978.

10. THE PROMISE

Though I don't consider the plodding "The Promise" to be one of my favorites musically, I'm fascinated with it lyrically. Bruce has steadfastly denied that it's a comment on the lawsuit, and he introduced it live as a song he wrote "soon after *Born to Run*." So then what is "The Promise" about? It appears to be the continuation of the story of the character in "Thunder Road," hence the direct reference to that song's title in the mournful, wailing chorus. But then, so is "Racing in the Street"; both songs depict the harsh flipside of *Born to Run*'s themes of youth, idealism and escapism and deal instead with aging, disillusionment and despair—in short, the themes of the entire *Darkness* album. What I think might have specifically disillusioned Bruce following *Born to Run*, leading him to write about it here through his "Thunder Road" race car driver, was the hype and its attendant backlash, being prejudged as a manufactured rock star. These may have been the demons that, in a larger sense, drove Bruce to write all the songs of this era—released and unreleased—and perform them with hell-bent-for-leather drive and enthusiasm.

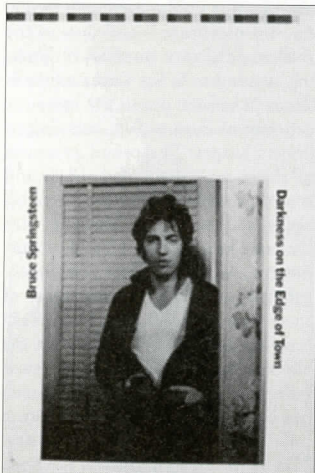
1978

January - April

Mixing begins for *Darkness on the Edge of Town*, with Springsteen, Landau, Iovine and Van Zandt on hand. Landau soon asks Chuck Plotkin to visit the mixing sessions, and Plotkin clicks. He and Iovine will be credited with mixing *Darkness*, and he will be involved on every Springsteen album from this point forward. Springsteen and Landau will be listed as producers. Van Zandt, who receives production assistance credit on the record, is also working on the Jukes' third album, *Hearts of Stone*. Gray Russell remembers: "Steven had a double role. He was helping on the production of *Darkness*, but he was also the lone producer of the Jukes album. So Steven was always going back and forth.... I think Steve was there with us when we mixed 'Racing in the Street.' He was one of the hands on the console. He was very involved." *Hearts of Stone*, with songs by Springsteen and Van Zandt, is released this year and will become a classic.

In **February**, the first issue of *Thunder Road*, the first Springsteen fanzine, is published by co-editors Lou Cohan and Ken Viola.

Even though the mixing process has already begun, Bruce and the band still haven't finished recording for their new album. On **March 1**, they cut a take of the radio-ready rocker "Don't Look Back" that is to be included on the new record; it is pulled only at the very end, when "Darkness on the Edge of Town" is the last-minute choice for inclusion. Two other songs are also considered until the eleventh hour: "The Promise" is finally left off because it may be interpreted as being only



Farther along: a proof for an alternate *Darkness* cover design.



The Spectrum, 1978

PHIL CECOLA PHOTO

about the lawsuit; "Independence Day" seems to belong to the next chapter of the story.

Work begins on the album packaging, though a title is still not yet decided upon; cover layouts include the alternate title *Racing in the Street*. Cover photography is taken by Frank Stefanko, a friend of Patti Smith from South Jersey who works at a meat market. Springsteen goes to Stefanko's house in Haddonfield, and Stefanko stops Bruce as he's standing against the wall upstairs in the photographer's bedroom. Stefanko says, "I can't put it into words, exactly, but suddenly, he reminded me of myself at age 14. It was something in his face, I really don't know." Springsteen, who is greatly involved in all aspects of the new record, likes the shot and gives the go-ahead. Album-cover designer Andrea Klein later tells *Backstreets*: "He took a personal involvement mainly because he felt too commercialized from the *Born to Run* era. He wanted to make sure that the graphics that came out were not the least bit commercial and in no way was it going to be graphic and slick. He made sure he wasn't going to look too great. There was no retouching allowed, as always."

May

More than two-and-a-half years after the last album, *Darkness on the Edge of Town* is almost ready for the world. Springsteen does a personal "press-check" on the album cover—this is virtually unheard of—at Ivy Hill Lithographers in New York. With Bruce's approval, the plan is now to get the album out before the tour begins later this month. But at the last minute Springsteen and Landau go to L.A. to remix "The Promised Land," adding a guitar solo from Van Zandt. This means the

entire album side must be remastered and the album briefly delayed, but as Springsteen tells the *New York Times* this month, "After *Born to Run* I didn't want to do another album right away. If you start worrying about putting out a follow-up album, you get caught up in the machine of the industry. I had a blast of that, and I learned something. I learned what I wanted to do with myself and what I didn't want to do with myself."

Patti Smith's "Because the Night" enters the top 40 on **May 13**. Iovine had been producing Smith's *Easter* at the same time he was engineering for Springsteen, and he explains to a journalist: "Bruce was very understanding and very flexible, because he

realized that this was my first real break as a producer. Anyway, one night while we were lounging around the Hotel Navarro in New York I told Bruce I desperately wanted a hit with Patti, that she deserved one. He agreed. As he had no immediate plans to put 'Because the Night' on an album, I said, 'Why not give it to Patti?' Bruce replied, 'If she can do it, she can have it.' What happened in the press was... er, Patti being Patti, she said that Bruce pestered her to record it, but that's not how it was." Smith's version will go to #13 within a month.

On **May 18**, the *Darkness* album is played for the first time on the radio in L.A., San Francisco, St. Louis and

ROBERT SANTELLI

The Asbury Park music scene's most hands-on journalist/historian. The Backstreets Associate Editor is now Director of Education at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland:

I went to see a Bruce show in San Diego in 1978. I was living in Laguna Beach, CA, about 45 minutes north of San Diego, with these other Jersey guys, surfers from Bay Head and Point Pleasant Beach. Before the show, we went to this bar. I had on a very torn and tattered Stone Pony shirt. I was standing next to this wealthy-looking Southern California guy. He had on this flowery Hawaiian print shirt with a white suit and shoes. He was a tan, handsome guy. He said, "Excuse me, I want you to sell me that t-shirt." I said, "Fuck off!" But he said, "Name your price." So I said, "A hundred bucks." He said okay.

So we went into the bathroom and exchanged shirts. I was a grad student at the time, so I didn't have a lot of money. I walk out with this flashy Hawaiian shirt and a hundred bucks, he walks out with this shirt with holes. Why'd the guy do it? He was a Springsteen fan who considered Asbury Park the center of the rock 'n' roll universe with Bruce as its god. I guess the guy needed that t-shirt.

By the end of the night, we didn't have a dime left.

—Interview by Robert Makin

DARKNESS IN REVIEW

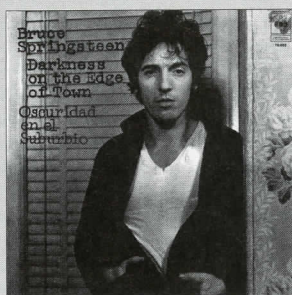
Excerpts from 1978 reviews of *Darkness on the Edge of Town*

Jim Miller in *New Times*:

"...By compressing all his favorite themes of frustration and hope, repression and rebellion, into one emblematic anthem like 'Badlands,' Springsteen unwittingly illuminates the strained seriousness and failure of imagination that mars the rest of *Darkness on the Edge of Town*.... if it breaks the spell of high expectations imprisoning him, this debacle may yet enable Springsteen to give himself more of the psychological space he obviously needs to create music that sounds genuinely felt rather than hopelessly contrived. Until then, he will remain a casualty of media canonization, cut loose from the roots that once gave his music immediacy, authority, and an unforced importance."

Dave Marsh in *Rolling Stone*:

"...Just as the production of this record unifies certain technical trends, Springsteen's presentation



makes rock itself whole again. This is true musically—he rocks as hard as a punk, but with the verbal grace of a singer/songwriter—and especially emotionally. If these songs are about experienced adulthood, they sacrifice none of rock 'n' roll's adolescent innocence. Springsteen escapes the narrow dogmatism of both Old Wave and New, and the music's possibilities are once again limitless.... [*Darkness*] feels like the threshold of a new period in which we'll again have "lives on the line where dreams are found and lost." It poses once more the question that rock 'n' roll's epiphanic moments always raise: Do you believe in magic?

And once again, the answer is yes. Absolutely."

Peter Knobler in *Crawdaddy*:

"Bruce has been hurt. You can hear it all over *Darkness on the Edge of Town*: title, opening cut, vocals, lyrics, production. He's running scared.... On *Born to Run*, Bruce was flying down streets he knew, a flawless escape. On *Darkness*, he's being chased. It's not an easy album to listen to; *Born to Run* seems innocent beside it. This record is trouble....

Pain never used to show on him.... In 'Born to Run,' he rhymed 'sadness' with 'madness' and blew right on by. But now he is owning

up to it, doing for desperation what he did for release. The effect is unsettling, then staggering.... He moans, 'It ain't no sin to be glad you're alive.' Obviously somebody has making him feel that it is, and Bruce is furious. The anger is raw and fresh and completely unexpected...."

Mitch Cohen in *Creem*:

"This ain't salvation. This ain't betrayal. *Darkness on the Edge of Town* is an artful, passionate, rigorous record that walks a fine line between defeat and defiance, and if it had considerably more of the go-for-broke recklessness that it celebrates, it might have also been a great record. But if frustration is its subject—the walled-up sensation that pounds at your gut, the daytime monotony that leads to nighttime explosion—it's also its essence, its soul. The best of this music—"Badlands," "Streets of Fire"—doesn't

just describe the rage, it embodies it.... Then the album is as powerful as rock 'n' roll gets. As often, however, the songs sound mannered, overly solipsistic, and so serious. Doesn't this guy ever get

in the car to go get a pack of cigarettes? It's a major production every time he turns the ignition key.

There are no jokes on *Darkness*—no intentional ones, anyway—and Bruce Springsteen really used to be the rockomick (maybe it was all those months in the studio that squelched his sense of humor).... and I'd trade all seven minutes of 'Racing in the Street,' including Roy Bittan's admirable piano work, for one moment of the spontaneity with which Bruce shouts 'Come on, Wendy!' like some hoodlum Peter Pan on 'Born to Run'....

Somehow *Darkness on the Edge of Town* works, through cumulative impact, variations on repetition, the sudden sizzling effect, and it's an achievement when an album so self-absorbed, claustrophobic and didactic can still be filled with blood and hope.... Right now, in the middle of a heartbreak, *Darkness* sounds like the record it's supposed to be: a tough, exhausted hymn to feverish desire, a dissection of internal wounds that can be healed not by compromise but by conquest...."

Detroit; CBS sends "cease and desist" telegrams. The following day, **May 19**, the band rehearses for the tour at the Paramount Theatre in Asbury Park. The *Darkness on the Edge of Town* tour begins **May 23** in Buffalo, NY, at Shea Theatre. The show includes an intermission, standard from now on. *Newsweek* reports that at this first show of the tour, "Springsteen grabbed the microphone so hard during his first song that he broke it." Every song from the new album except "Factory" is played, marking the live premiere of most of the album's songs as well as "Paradise by the C" and "Fire." Technical problems, time off the road and so much unfamiliar material—much of it packed into the first set—makes for an oddly paced show, but Springsteen wins the crowd over. John Rockwell writes in the *New York Times* that the "performance here—despite some inevitable rustiness and opening night hitches—was simply wonderful. Mr. Springsteen was about the finest performer in rock 'n' roll a couple of years ago, and he hasn't slipped an inch...."

Bruce and the band return to the Spectrum in Philly on **May 26-27**. Harvey Kubernik writes in *Melody Maker*: "Springsteen keeps getting better with age, and the E Street Band are just as arresting. When Bruce Springsteen comes to Philadelphia, it's an event, not a concert.... Another thing that impresses me about the Philadelphia Springsteen concerts is that everyone knows the names of all the band members. It's like a baseball team, where people have followed the progress of the players since they hit the big leagues...." Guitar Tech Mike Batlan recalls later, "The third night on the road, at the Spectrum in Philly, when Bruce busted a string, he threw the Esquire to me, but it hit the ground. The bridge plate and input jack popped out. He hasn't thrown it since." Springsteen's guitar is more integral than ever, as the *Darkness* tour finds Bruce playing more lead. A spare Telecaster is on the road for occasions like these. Batlan continues: "The Esquire never travels on a truck. It stays with me on the bus. If we stop at a restaurant, the Esquire goes in. It's at the root of Bruce's sound on stage and in the studio."

On **May 29-31** they return to the Boston Music Hall, with the E Street debut of "Because the Night." Paul Nelson covers the shows in *Rolling Stone*: "Tonight has an air of



expectancy—one may even say privilege. There's an intensity present, a premonition that this is where the best music in America might well be happening in the next few hours, and the hope that it may be true. It is."

June

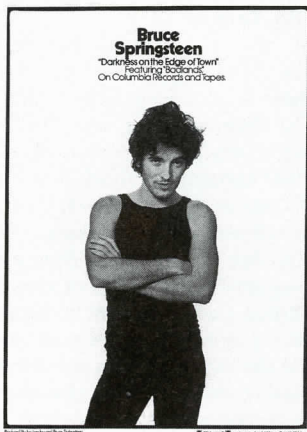
Mark Mehler writes in *Circus*: "On **June 3**, a standing-room-only house at Nassau Coliseum on Long Island that paid \$114,500 awaits him with a visceral anticipation bordering on mass hysteria. As the man once described as 'the future of rock 'n' roll' bounds onto the stage, the crowd rises to its feet as one. During one of the songs, a wreath of flowers plops at Springsteen's shoes. With a gnashing lunge, he bites off the stems. He is dressed in stark black on white. Patrolling the proscenium as if guarding it from interlopers, he leaps and growls, imploring the audience to redirect some of his manic energy back to the stage. In short, it is vintage Springsteen just as his new album, *Darkness on the Edge of Town*, makes it seem as though the three-year hiatus never happened...."

A year after recording began, *Darkness* is released on **June 6**. The record ships gold—eventually going double platinum—and enters the *Billboard* charts at number 39, peaking at number 5. Jay Cocks writes in *Time*: "*Darkness* passes the romantic delirium of *Born to Run*, cuts deeper, lingers longer. The proud prisoners of shore towns, the rod riders and front-porch madonnas, turn up again, but no longer bursting with the same heady spirit. Here the 'shut-down strangers and hot rod angels' suffer a sudden, splintering sense of their own settled fates. They crash right up against that darkness in the album's title." The record is a clear reflection of how much Springsteen has been through since 1975; Bruce tells Peter Knobler in *Crawdaddy*: "On *Born to Run* there was the hope of a free ride. On *Darkness*, there ain't no free ride—you wanna ride, you gotta pay. And maybe you'll make it



through, but you ain't gonna make it through 'til you been beat, you been hurt, until you been messed up. There's hope, but it's just the hope of, like, survival. It couldn't be a warm, innocent album like *Born to Run* because it ain't that way, it wasn't that way for me anymore. That's why a lot of pain had to be there, because it's real, because it happens. But still, I came out of it—you can see it onstage, I wasn't stopped.... I had a big awakening in the past two, three years. much bigger than people would think. Learned a lot of things, saw a lot of things. Realized a lot of things about my own past. So it's there on the record. You could see it onstage, the whole band's just full of too much life to throw it all away. It makes it that much more valuable for me. To be able to go out there tonight means more than it meant three years ago because I had to do a lot to get out there. And like the record meant more than, maybe, the other records. So when I made it I wanted to make sure that I was gonna be true to what was real for me now."

Darkness gives the first real indication of what will become one reason for his staying power as an artist: his willingness to change and let accumulated experience affect his writing. Michael Davis writes in *Record Review*: "This album may appear to be a bit of a down when compared to Bruce's previous work, but that is mainly due to the man's coming face-to-face with some of the less pleasant aspects of the aging process. What gave *Born to Run* its romantic, anthem-like qualities, besides its bracing, exciting music, was the unspoken assumption that the 'midnight run' could sustain the illusion of escape. Now that illusion has melted away with time, and like much of his audience, Bruce can no longer joke about it as he did on his first album.... It's become too real for that." Springsteen, who will turn 30 the next year, says, "Rock and roll is like sports in that when you're 35 you're considered an old man. But that's just what you're considered. It's not true. That's why I listen to coun-



PIECE DE RESISTANCE

Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band have never been better, on a pure musical level, than on the 1978 tour. Sure, there have been larger shows, "grander" shows, shows with more spectacle, but for maximum rock 'n' roll, the *Darkness* tour can't be beat. And of those concerts, my vote for the best of the best is September 19, 1978 at the Capitol Theatre in Passaic, New Jersey. The show was broadcast and bootlegged on CD (*Pièce de Résistance*), and it sounds tremendous: a booming, thunderous performance played to diamond-hard precision, with every instrument mixed and balanced perfectly. It sounds exactly like the show sounded: when Bruce's guitar rips into the "Prove it All Night" solo, it sounds like a buzzsaw's berserk drone; when Clarence blows the first note of any solo, the crowd roars like when a baseball player hits a home run. I know, because I was there.

It was only the third time I had ever seen Bruce, but it's the closest I've ever been. The show was the first of a three-night stand, considered a "homecoming" by the Capitol Theatre's owner, John Scher, following Bruce's summer-long, country-wide *Darkness* tour. Scher wanted to make it special and had the Capitol marquee illustrated to mark the event; I was the lucky artist commissioned to do it. I negotiated a special fee for the illustration: six sixth-row seats for myself and my friends. We all saw the show of our lives.

At least five songs stand out as definitive live versions, not only from the *Darkness* tour, but from Bruce's career: "Promised Land," "Prove it All Night," the extended "Backstreets" with the "Sad Eyes" interlude, "Because the Night," and "She's the One" with the "Not Fade Away" pre-

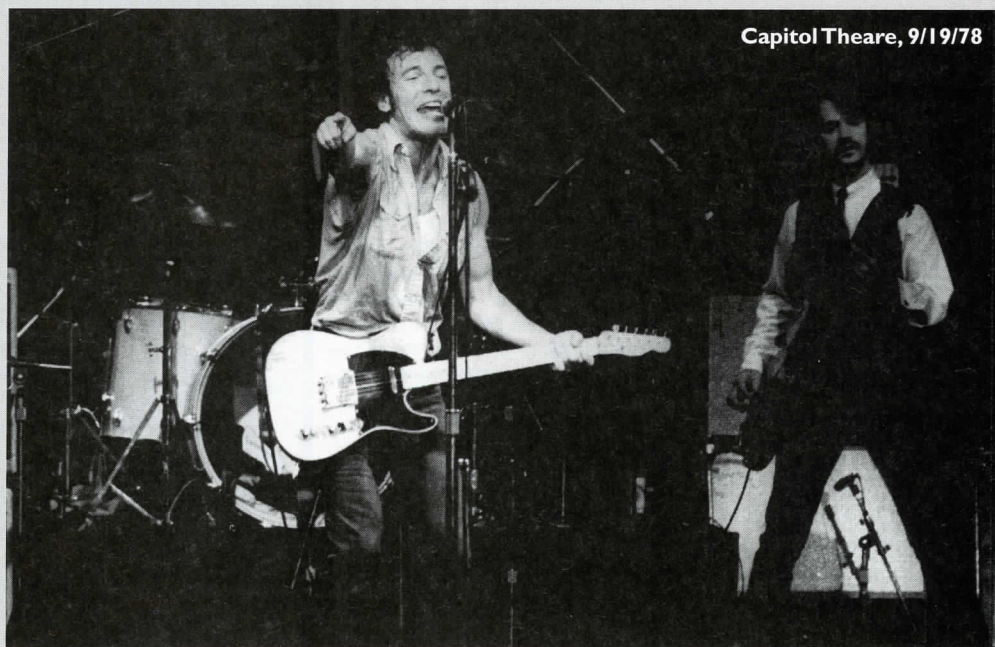
lude. Listen to how full the band sounds when it kicks into "The Promised Land" after Bruce's harmonica intro, and how Garry's bass parries Clarence's sax in the solo. Max's machine gun drumming at the end of "Prove it All Night," Roy's jazzy piano at the beginning. The seamless transition from "Not Fade Away"—with Bruce singing like Elvis on alternate lines—to "She's the One" with Steven's tasty rhythm guitar licks up front in the mix. Bruce's screaming, wrenching guitar solos on the aforementioned "Prove it All Night," "Because the Night" and "Backstreets."

Ah, "Backstreets." While I'm also partial to the one played at Jacksonville, Florida in '77 (with the monumental "You lied!"), the Capitol Theatre has my desert-island version. The "Sad Eyes" interlude sounds like spoken-word poetry/performance art; you can really hear Bruce's measured breathing syncopating with Roy's music-box piano. The buildup of "Little girl we've got to stop" to its crashing crescendo sounds as awesome as it was to behold, with Marc Brickman's lighting—the stage going pitch black on Bruce's final "Stop!"; the

crowd hushed and then exploding a moment later, as the band begins to reassemble. Individual spotlights fade in until the white light finale of the "Backstreets" theme recapitulation, leading to Bruce's closing wordless howls—some of his best ever—over a most orchestral grandeur.

To this day, I have yet to hear any *Darkness* performance that can hold a candle to this Capitol Theatre show, song for song, note for note. It's perfect. It's Bruce's de facto live album.

—Arlen Schumer



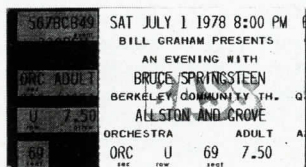
Capitol Theare, 9/19/78

ARLEN SCHUMER

JOHN WOODING PHOTO

try music a lot, because it allows growing up. There's an entire generation in country music that's in its 40s, and it's still there."

On **June 9** the album's first single, "Prove It All Night" b/w "Factory" is released. During the month of June, Bruce and the E Street Band play coast to coast, beginning in Annapolis, MD, and landing in Berkeley, CA on **June 30**.



July

Jon Landau officially becomes Springsteen's manager this month. The first week of July finds Bruce with high-profile gigs in California, press attention rivaling that of the 1975 Bottom Line dates. The **July 1** show at Berkeley's Community Theater will be remembered as one of Bruce's finest performances, and it is recorded for potential release. Within a few days, Iovine is working with tapes in the studio and mixes the live "Prove It All Night" for FM radio. Columbia, still looking to maximize Bruce's radio appeal, is planning a 12-inch promotional single, which gets far enough along that an acetate, labels and cover stickers are pressed and printed. Though the 12-inch is scrapped, "Prove It" is eventually broadcast in a syndicated radio special, along with "Paradise By the C". On **July 4**, Dave Marsh listens to the tapes when he spends the day with Bruce for a feature in *Rolling Stone*. That night, as Marsh's article reports, Springsteen, Garry Tallent, Clarence Clemons and a few others set out to tamper with a monstrous *Darkness* billboard in L.A.—"the ugliest thing I've ever seen in my life," says Bruce—which advertises the next night's concert at the Forum. With black spray paint, they write "Prove It All Night" and "E Street" across the whole thing. Bruce leaves the scene via fire escape.

He tells of the previous night's exploits at the **July 5** show at the Forum, where his parents are among the roughly 15,000 people in attendance. At midnight, a show in two days at the Roxy—a 500-seater—is announced on the radio. A line soon begins forming. On **July 7**, the night of the Roxy gig, Springsteen has his first television appearance as KABC airs a ten-minute interview segment with future-MTV veejay, J. J. Jackson, from the Forum show. The Roxy concert—which will go down in history as one of the best ever—is broadcast live on KMET and will later be used as one of the source concerts for the *Live* box. The show

opens with premiere of "Rave On," and includes the debuts of two future *River* cuts, "Point Blank" and "Independence Day." After the intermission, Springsteen comes back and says his famous words, "All right, all you bootleggers out there in radioland—roll your tapes!" And they do.

On **July 8**, at a sold-out show in Phoenix, AZ, official tapes are rolling as a film crew shoots five songs for promotional use and for the U.S. "Heroes of Rock 'n' Roll" television special. This essentially marks the filming of Springsteen's first music video, as "Rosalita" will be released as a video in 1984. Of the show, Marsh raves in *Rolling Stone*: "It's not just that it's another fantastic show. This is another goddamn event, and it goes farther than the Roxy, with all of that show's intimacy, innocence and vulnerability, but with an added factor of pandemonium. It's maniacal. Bruce dedicates the show to the town in memory of the time 'when this was about the only place I could get a job,' and the crowd gives it back...."

For the rest of July, the tour moves through Texas into the south, with shows in Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Florida and South Carolina. **July 15** in Houston is the last-known performance of "The Promise." On the same day, "Prove It All Night" enters the *Billboard* Top 40 chart, where it spends two weeks and reaches number 33. The *Baltimore Sun* later writes of the song "just barely" making the charts: "One wonders why it was chosen, because it's the album's weakest link." "Factory," the only song off *Darkness* that has yet to be played, has its premiere in Nashville on **July 21**.

August

More unreleased material premieres this month. "Sherry Darling" debuts **August 4** in Charleston, WV. On **August 7**, "The Ties That Bind" premieres but is not played again for several months, as Springsteen and the band continue to refine the song during soundchecks. Springsteen plays a benefit concert on **August 9** for radio station WMMS' tenth anniversary, at the Agora in Cleveland, where "Growin' Up" includes the legendary "Teenage Werewolf" story. On **August 14** the new album's second single is released in the U.S., "Badlands" b/w "Streets of Fire." The U.K. version, issued the previous month, features a different b-side, "Something in the Night." Despite rave tour reviews, the single does not crack the Top 40 in the U.S.

The **August 15** Landover, MD show is one of the most-seen Springsteen shows, thanks to a recording from the Capital Centre's closed-circuit TV system that later circulates on unauthorized video. Peter Ruelh

The first list that one might consider compiling for the *Darkness* tour would be to select its ten greatest shows. And while the order of such a list would be highly debatable, most fans would be inclined to include the usual suspects: The Roxy 7/7/78, Cleveland 8/9/78, Winterland 12/15/78, Capitol Theatre 9/19/78, Charleston 8/1/78, et al. The radio broadcasts and the shows that are well bootlegged have a distinct advantage, but beyond that, is there really any point in hair-splitting greatness?

In lieu of such a ranking, this list intends only to cite ten distinct moments on the *Darkness* tour where something special, and usually unexpected, happened. Not the greatest performances or the best set lists, but incidents worth revisiting.

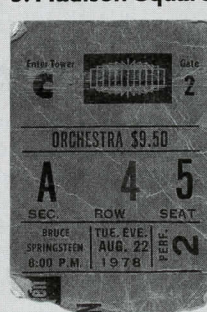
1. The Roxy, Los Angeles, CA, July 7

From "Rave On" to "Twist and Shout," the Roxy show is truly one of Springsteen's finest. The show marked the premiere of both "Point Blank" and "Independence Day," but among its many magic moments, one in particular is easily overlooked. "All right, the roadies are tunin' my guitar, we got somethin' for ya in the meantime," Bruce says, introducing a brazen version of "Heartbreak Hotel." Though there would be many more Presley covers to follow, this particular one was Bruce's first since the death of the King 11 months earlier. The mourning period was over.

2. Houston Coliseum, Houston, TX, July 15

On a otherwise ordinary Thursday night in Texas, with little fanfare—"This is something that we recorded after *Born to Run*—Bruce retires what is arguably his greatest unreleased song, "The Promise." Played for most of the first two months of the tour, many believed the song would still wind up on Bruce's next album even after he stopped playing it. Will "The Promise" finally see the light of day on the proposed box set?

3. Madison Square Garden, New York, NY, August 22



Due in part to the great photo in Dave Marsh's *Born to Run* which captured the moment, many fans know Springsteen's mother joined him on stage during closing night at Madison Square Garden. But she wasn't the only family member to turn up during the three-night stand. Just before "Sweet Little Sixteen," Bruce put the spotlight on his kid sister and future photographer, Pam: "We're gonna do a song that everybody's done. We used to do it in the bars, every band ever did it. Nobody did it better than Chuck Berry—we're gonna do it anyway.

Because what happens is, my mother, she calls me up on the phone, see, she says, 'Bruce, your sister, man, she's running out—she's takin' the car, she's skippin' school, she's not behavin' herself.' She always wants me to talk to her, like, 'She'll listen to you, you talk some sense into her.' And she's doin' all the stuff like I used to do when I was 16... She's over there, so I'm gonna do this—where are ya?... [Crowd cheers.] Well, I guess my little sister, she's lookin' pretty good, huh?"

4. Stanley Theatre, Pittsburgh, PA, August 29



One of the lingering mysteries of Springsteen collecting comes from this particular show. Stuck between the typical pairing of "The Promised Land" and "Prove It All Night" is the only known performance of "(I Heard That) Lonesome Whistle," written by Hank Williams and Jimmie Davis. Davis later served as governor of Louisiana, and also wrote "You Are My Sunshine." Springsteen's forlorn version in Pittsburgh (a city where strange Bruce moments seem to happen) is eerily moving, and at the same time very out of place in the context of the show. Even on the surviving document of the show, an audience recording, the song sounds like it

Ten Great Moments on the *Darkness* Tour

BY ERIK FLANNIGAN AND MARK STRICHERZ

has come from some other place. One month later, at a soundcheck in Passaic, Bruce would perform Williams' "Wedding Bells."

5. Masonic Temple, Detroit, MI, September 1

Just what was going on with Springsteen the night of this show cannot be speculated upon. But one might assume, by his song selection, that he had something weighing on his mind. The second set opens with the little-played "Lost in the Flood." The version is gut-wrenching, as Bruce plays the song alone on the piano. Three songs later, Bruce tells the crowd, "I'm gonna try something, all right? I don't know these words, but I just thought about doing it last night, and so I'm gonna read the words." A music stand is brought to the stage holding the same lyric notebook he used on "Lost in the Flood," and after a few adjustments ("This is embarrassing... I'm short!") he says, "All right, I'll try it... This is one of my favorite songs. Here we go, let's give it a shot." He strums a few cautious chords, Roy comes in, and in an instant, Bruce turns towards Max Weinberg, yells "Heavy pedal on the drums!"—and "Chimes of Freedom" starts flashing. "Far between sun-down's finish, and midnight's broken toll...."



Madison Square Garden,
August 1978

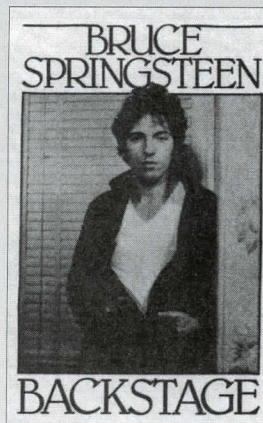
6. Civic Center, Saginaw, MI, September 3

Three songs into the second set, following a particularly raucous rendition of "Sherry Darling," Bruce's Fender Esquire is hopelessly out of tune. "I can never do this under the pressure of performance," Springsteen laughs after strumming a bit, and someone from the crowd yells, "Let the roadie do it!" So Bruce says, "I have to take a little walk to the back of the stage for a few minutes—I'll be right back, don't worry." Springsteen hands the instrument off, saying "the guitar has to rest every few songs." Undaunted, he promptly seizes the opportunity to turn an unexpected break in the show to advantage. After a little chit-chat with the crowd about the recent Detroit show and catching Bob Seger the night before, he says, "Let's do one we practiced this afternoon.... Here we go, we got a special surprise for you," and leads the band, in voice only, through a cover of "Hang Up My Rock and Roll Shoes," written by "C.C. Rider" composer Chuck Willis.

7. Notre Dame University, South Bend, IN, September 9

"It was the Deltas against the rules... the rules lost!" That line was used to promote one of the biggest box office hits of the summer of 1978, *Animal House*, which opened in June. Having not gone to college himself, one would suspect that Springsteen's fascination with "Frat Rock" may have been bolstered by the film. Following "Paradise By the 'C'" in the second set, Bruce gives his collegiate audience a little history lesson before playing two seminal examples of the genre, the

Swinging Medallions' "Double Shot of My Baby's Love" and Richard Berry's "Louie Louie": "We've been on the road since May 23, and we've never played this song. This song was originally done in 1967 by a group called the Swinging Medallions. And what it is, is the greatest Fraternity Rock song of all time. I don't know if there are any fraternities here tonight, but this is for your school, right?... 'It wasn't wine that I had too much of/It was a double shot of my baby's love.' Now, the chorus says those words a whole mess of times, so when we get to the chorus what you gotta do is, you gotta move like you're drunk. You gotta move like you're John Belushi!"



8. Maple Leaf Gardens Concert Bowl, Toronto, Canada, November 16

It's *Darkness* north of the border, as Springsteen and the E Street Band hit the Concert Bowl stage with a one-off performance of Little Richard's "Ready Teddy." But it's the start of the second set where things get even more interesting. With an awkward 12-string electric Fender riding a little high on his chest, Bruce begins strumming the guitar tentatively, saying, "All right, a little privacy here," and trying out a few chords. Seconds later, those chords ring out boldly to start a new song, "The Ties That Bind." The band had been playing "Ties" for two weeks, but it was on this night that the song was first tried as the second-set opener, where, in a few days time, it would remain for the rest of the tour.

9. Stanley Theater, Pittsburgh, PA, December 28

To say Springsteen was on a roll during the December home stretch of the *Darkness* tour is putting it mildly. Every show was the stuff of legend, and every setlist was different. In a telling measure of just how poised he was in those final weeks, Springsteen took the stage for his second night in Pittsburgh (and fourth show there on the tour) and opened with a brand new song, which would later wind up on *The River*: "I'm gonna do a hotrod song. This is called 'Ramrod.'" Think about it—starting the show not with "Badlands" or a feel-good, rock 'n' roll chestnut, but with an unreleased song nobody has ever heard and the band has never before played in public. Would any other artist even dare? Now that's confidence.

10. Richfield Coliseum, Cleveland, OH, December 31

It was to be an all out New Year's Eve party in Cleveland, the first of two shows to wrap up the *Darkness* tour. And by all counts it was, except one particularly tense moment. Earlier in the show, Bruce had a request: "You guys brought any firecrackers and stuff, I'd appreciate it if you didn't set 'em off, 'cause I don't want people getting hurt.... So if you just keep 'em in your pocket or something, I'd really appreciate it." Just after counting down the last seconds of 1978—"...five, four, three, two, one, Happy New Year! Kiss your girlfriend!"—someone in the upper tiers of seats threw a firecracker towards the stage, which exploded near Bruce's head. He wasn't exactly pleased: "Well, I almost lost my eye, thanks to some asshole." Then, hardly skipping a beat: "But that ain't gonna ruin my New Year, and I hope it don't ruin yours."

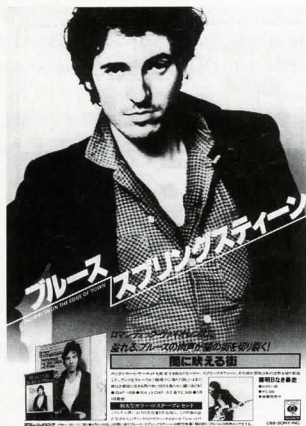


writes in the *Baltimore Sun*: "He dances around other band members, and nightly gives security men shivers by jumping off the stage and into the audience. He did that, as usual, at the Capital Centre, sending several girls into swoons by going down on one knee and singing to them on a mic with a 60-foot cord. It is the measure of the relationship between Springsteen and his fans that he has never been injured on one of his off-stage forays.... On Tuesday night, he twice gave his road people a scare by leaping onto the piano, and in two more jumps—playing his guitar simultaneously—climbing up the 15-foot-high bank of loudspeakers at the side of the stage. Clemons, a microphone buried in his huge gold sax, did the same on the other side and the two jammed for ten minutes with the crowd screaming at full wail...."

Gary Bussey—fresh from his title role in *The Buddy Holly Story*—joins the band on **August 18 and 19** at the Spectrum in Philadelphia for lead vocals on Holly's "Rave On." Philly D.J. Ed Sciahy interviews Bruce after the first show, saying he'd rate the show in the top five—"the most high-energy show I can ever remem-

ber at the Spectrum." Springsteen talks to Sciahy about doing the newer, darker material on the tour: "It's a different kind of fun. It's more fulfilling.... There's this stretch where we go from 'Darkness' to 'Thunder Road,' a stretch of songs that we do basically in the same order every night because there's this continuity thing that happens. It makes connections and it gives the rest of the show resonance. So then we can blow it out on 'Rosalita.'"

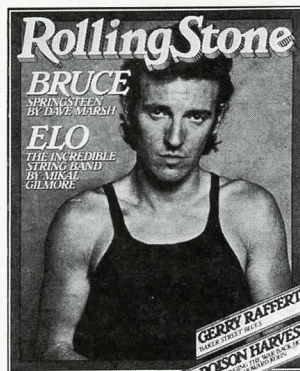
Over **August 21-23**, Bruce plays Madison Square Garden for the first time since opening for Chicago in 1973. *Circus* magazine describes the intensive soundcheck that Springsteen is known for: "Engineer Bruce Jackson... sits at the custom Clair Brothers [32-channel] board out over the audience area, adjusting the mix on guitar and voice as Springsteen strikes up Hank Williams' 'Jambalaya.' When the mix is right, Springsteen leaves the stage for the engineer's booth where he will confer with Jackson on the sound of each instrument. More of Springsteen's band appears.... When Springsteen is happy with each mix, including Federico's Jenco glockenspiel, the band launches into the chords to 'Thunder Road.' Springsteen leaves the engineer's booth with Jackson and begins circling the hall. The band continues 'Thunder Road' for fifteen minutes until Springsteen has covered every angle of the cavernous Garden, from top to bottom. He then proceeds up the center aisle to the stage for a full band rehearsal of several of the show's songs." The Garden's three sold-out shows include guest appearances from Bruce's family: he plays "Sweet Little Sixteen" for sister Pam and later brings her onstage for "Quarter to Three"; on the final night, Bruce's mother appears to demand one more encore, with Bruce saying "Aw, Mom, I can't do no more!"



JOHN SCHER *On the Darkness tour:*

Marc Brickman was the unassuming director of the show, and Steve Van Zandt was the musical director, unquestionably. Steven Van Zandt, musically, was equal partners with Brickman in this theatrical creation. It was just an amazing live presentation, almost unprecedented. You'd have to go back to the '60s heyday with The Who and The Rolling Stones and maybe The Kinks and Led Zeppelin to really ever come close to that raw energy and theatricality of what these massive rock concert events took on. They really created an atmosphere and world of their own. And it was the second bananas—musically, Steve Van Zandt, and theatrically, Marc Brickman—that made the magic. It's a shame that history didn't recognize it as such. Brickman would yell at Springsteen, "Jump on that table!" in the nightclubs. None of those moves came naturally to Bruce. Bruce started out a lot more introverted. Marc Brickman was the director of the show. If it was a play or a movie, he would have been nominated for a Tony or an Oscar. But in rock 'n' roll, there's no role of director.

—Interview by Robert Makin



The **August 24** issue of *Rolling Stone* is Springsteen's first time on the cover of the magazine; in concert Bruce soon changes a line in "Rosalita": "...your boy has grown. He's on the cover of *Rolling Stone*!" He tells the *Baltimore Sun* afterward, "I was just kind of joking around. I didn't mean anything big. Actually, Miami Steve shouted it in my ear just before I got to the line." Following their own show at Veteran's Memorial Coliseum in New Haven, CT on **August 25**, Bruce and Clarence do a late-night jam with Beaver Brown at Toad's Place. A week later on **August 31**, Bruce, in town for his Richfield Coliseum show the night before, joins Southside Johnny at the Agora in Cleveland for three songs.

September - December

The tour continues through Illinois and Ohio and back to New York by mid-month, where things really heat up. Three shows at the Palladium in New York, **September 15-17**, sell out in two hours, and see the set list shaken up considerably. Three shows at the Capitol Theatre in Passaic, NJ on **September 19-21**, become one of the tour's most memorable stands. WNEW does a live broadcast on the monumental first night, a peak-performance preserved on the best of all boots, *Pièce de Résistance*. On the last night at the Capitol, ushers carry a huge birthday cake down the aisle and put it onstage—and of course, out pops a scantily clad woman. Bruce—apparently completely surprised—picks her up and carries her offstage. A couple of days later he says, "I even told John Scher, 'no cakes.'"

After the **September 25** Boston Garden show, Bruce talks to the *Boston Globe* backstage; the *Darkness* experience has clearly been a good one for him, as he has successfully overcome the *Born to Run* hype and is reconnecting with his audience once again. The paper reports, "He is unquestionably happier with success in the summer of '78 because it comes from 'the kids.' His conversations are peppered with frequent references to their loyalty." According to the *Globe*, Bruce has gone from 153

pounds to 135 pounds over the course of the tour so far, and from a 30-inch waist to a 27. Bruce tells the paper, "I eat only if I am hungry. The exertion from the show is so great that if something is not sitting right in my stomach, I get sick." But, he says, "doing a show actually revitalizes me."

Springsteen and the E Street Band take a month-long break from the tour in **October**, but they use the time to rehearse new material and work out the arrangement of "The Ties That Bind." Bruce guests with the Knack at the Troubador in Los Angeles, and Landau and Springsteen also reportedly use the time off to work on the August 9 Agora recording for possible release. There is no third single from *Darkness* in the U.S., but on **October 27**, "The Promised Land" b/w "Streets of Fire" is issued in the U.K.

On the first night back on the road, **November 1**, a refined "The Ties That Bind" returns to the set in Princeton, NJ. The band plays a large number of on-campus shows through November and December. On **November 27**, "Santa Claus is Comin' to Town," which has been played sporadically to this point, is played at the Milwaukee Arena and every night for the rest of the tour. In **December**, CBS runs an ad promoting Springsteen's catalog for holiday sales, saying "New SPRINGSTEEN LP coming soon!" It will actually be nearly another two years before the fifth album.

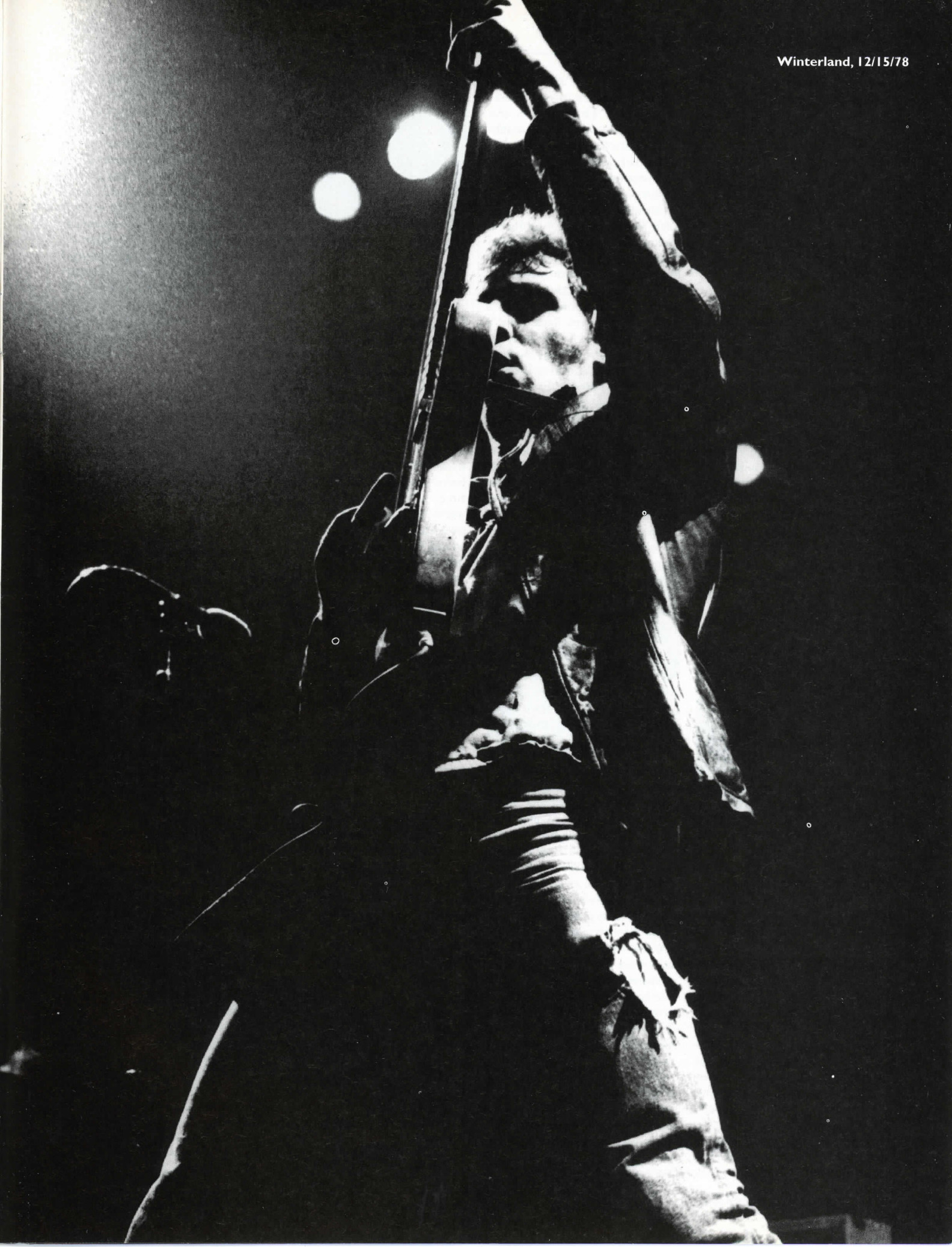


In mid-month, the band hits Winterland in San Francisco, CA for two nights, with the legendary show on **December 15** broadcast live on KSAN and captured on the bootleg *Live in the Promised Land*. The day of the second Winterland show, **December 16**, the Pointer Sisters' cover of "Fire" enters the top 40, soon reaching #2—yet another instance of an artist having better sales with a Springsteen song than Springsteen himself. **December 20** brings a stunning performance in Seattle—the show Charles R. Cross writes about in the first issue of *Backstreets*. **December 28**, the second of two nights in Pittsburgh, features the debut of "Ramrod." At Richmond Coliseum in Cleveland, on **December 31** and **January 1**, Springsteen and the band ring in the new year and—after seven months on the road and more than 100 shows—bring the *Darkness* tour to a triumphant close.

—Christopher Phillips

Next issue: The River

Winterland, 12/15/78



ON COLLECT ING

By Richard Breton
and Lynn Elder

For the benefit of our readers, *Backstreets* magazine provides ratings of unauthorized releases currently in circulation. Don't write us asking where these can be obtained. *Backstreets* in no manner, shape, or form endorses these recordings. These reviews are provided by our columnists solely for informational purposes. Despite these words of warning, some collectors will still seek this material out, and for those collectors, our reviews should help you steer clear of the real losers.

Unauthorized CDs are growing in numbers and with that growth, expect some real rip-offs—our advice is let the buyer beware, and demand to listen to material before you buy it. Each title here has been rated for packaging, performance, and sound quality on a scale from one to ten, one being awful, and ten being quality generally found on legitimate releases.



•The Homecoming

(E. St. Records, 2CD)

Sound Quality: 9

Packaging: 9

Performance: 9

While it's great when Bruce is on tour with a new album, there's something to be said about the between-tour lull: new bootlegs of the recent tour die down, and the bootleggers finally get around to releasing worthwhile titles from the past. E. St. specializes in finding some of the best and brightest uncirculated gems; this release is no exception, capturing a great "home-town" show from the *Born to Run* tour for the first time on disc.

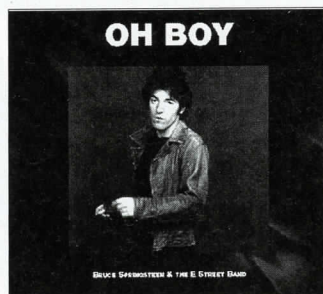
The Homecoming is taken from an excellent soundboard tape of the

October 11, 1975 show at the Carlton Theater in Red Bank, New Jersey. This stop on the *Born to Run* tour had an early show and a late show, the latter being represented here. The show opened with just Roy Bitan on piano and Springsteen on vocals for a splendid "Incident on 57th Street." Other highlights include "It's Gonna Work Out Fine"; "She's the One" with Bruce's harmonica intro; the slow "E Street Shuffle" with a nice variation on the intro story; a long, jazzy "Kitty's Back"; and a fine "Jungleland." The encores begin with "4th Of July, Asbury Park (Sandy)" and also include "Quarter to Three," "Carol" with David Sancious guesting, and the "Devil With the Blue Dress" medley. Several of Springsteen's family members are in attendance, notably an uncle and Bruce's oldest sister, which leads to some funny moments, during "Spirit in the Night" in particular.

The overall sound on this set is excellent, though not perfect. Some parts suffer mildly from tape alignment problems which cause the high frequencies—particularly noticeable in the cymbals—to go slightly in and out of "focus." This problem is relatively minor, however, and it's hardly enough to detract from the performances.

Unfortunately, the source tape also missed a few moments: there's an edit in "Jungleland" around the "Beneath the city..." section; "Sandy" is joined in progress around the first chorus; and the first half of the "Devil With the Blue Dress" medley is missing. The mix varies, sometimes putting either Bruce's voice, Danny's organ, or Clarence's sax way up front. Case in point: there's a police whistle during "Kitty's Back" that'll slice right through your skull. It's also too bad there aren't bonus tracks here from the early show. But as performances go, this is one of the better ones from this tour. Not quite up to the Roxy gigs Bruce and the band would play the following week, but great nonetheless.

All in all, *The Homecoming* is still a worthwhile release—especially for the stand-out version of "Incident on 57th Street"—and the lovely packaging and picture discs from E. St. are just icing on the cake.



•Oh Boy

(E. St. Records, 3CD)

Sound Quality: 9

Packaging: 8

Performance: 8

One of the earliest and best sounding CD bootlegs was one called *Oh Boy!*, released on the Archive Productions subsidiary of the Scorpio label back in 1989. That set was a two-disc affair containing most of the Charleston, West Virginia show from August 4, 1978. At the time, 3CD sets of Bruce shows were just beginning to emerge overseas, but for a domestically based label, marketing a title with more than two CDs was relatively unheard of. As a result, a couple of songs were cut from the show on the original *Oh Boy!* release: "Racing In The Street" and "Jungleland." To add insult to injury, Scorpio also had the bad habit on all of their releases, which were primarily non-Bruce, of editing out the between-song stage patter and song introductions, and this original release was no exception. That is how one of the best sounding soundboards from the 1978 tour has been treated, until now.

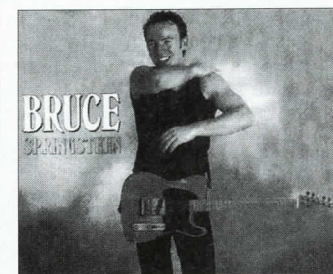
E. St. Records rectifies most of the problems with their release of the same show—this time called *Oh Boy*, without the exclamation point—by including all the songs as well as all the between-song moments. Unfortunately, they cannot rectify the missing piece of "Backstreets," or include the complete "Quarter to Three," which fades out a little more than five minutes into the song, because those problems originate with the source tape. The sound isn't that different than the original *Oh Boy!* release, but it didn't have to be; for a 1978 soundboard, the original sounded great. In fact, it sounds as if both releases used exactly the same source tape.

The highlights here include the Buddy Holly cover "Oh Boy" which segues into "Badlands"; a fine "Factory" with the whole spoken intro this time; "Growin' Up" with the "pissing in my desk" story; and a great "Because the Night." This show marked the premiere of "Sherry Darling," but the song is a bit rough. Clarence is clearly off during the second set, as evidenced by some bum notes during both "Paradise By The 'C'" and "Sherry Darling." This is a fun show, but as performances go, it is definitely on the "B" list.

The bonus tracks on the third disc include the three songs ("The Fever," "I Don't Want to Go Home" and "Havin' a Party") from Bruce's appearance at the August 31, 1978 Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes show in Cleveland, and three songs ("Incident on 57th Street," "Rosalita" and "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out") from the September 17, 1978 Bruce show at The Palladium in New York City. All the bonus tracks sound fine, and the the nearly perfect, first-time-in-1978 version of "Incident" makes up for the fact that "Rosalita" is included twice.

The packaging is typical of E. St. releases, although the disc graphics themselves are rather drab. While I would classify this as an upgrade to the original, the new *Oh Boy* makes it on relative completeness alone. Whether you should get this disc depends on how much you liked the original or how much you liked the '78 tour. If you're a '78 tour junkie like me, you'll want this release.

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•Bloomington Night

(Crystal Cat Records, 3CD)

Sound Quality: 9

Packaging: 8

Performance: 9

Just as the 1988 tour was finally getting into gear, the U.S. leg was almost over. Those who caught the shows during the final month in the U.S. experienced some of the best performances of the tour. This set is taken from

the May 10, 1988 show in Bloomington, Minnesota—and those who attended were in for a couple of treats, whether they liked it or not.

This show has two claims to fame: the 1988 tour premiere of "Boom Boom," and, more importantly, the one and only time "Cautious Man" was performed live. "Boom Boom" was performed at the soundcheck several times and was performed in place of "Be True" at the show. While it's a fine version, better performances surfaced later in the tour. "Cautious Man" may never top anyone's poll as their favorite track from *Tunnel of Love*, but the performance here is a welcome addition and goes a long way towards redeeming this song. In fact, it wouldn't have been out of place had Bruce included it on the *Ghost Of Tom Joad* tour.

Other highlights include Clarence's showcase on "All That Heaven Will Allow"; a rockin' "She's the One"; fine versions of "One Step Up" and "Backstreets"; the acoustic "Born to Run"; a great audience sing-along for "Hungry Heart"; and "Rosalita." The nearly over-the-top encores include "Have Love, Will Travel," "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out," "Sweet Soul Music," "Raise Your Hand" and "Twist and Shout." The only thing missing is the complete "Light of Day," which is cut short because of the source tape. In an odd move, a different source tape is used to extend what there is of "Light of Day," but only for about 15-20 seconds.

The bonus tracks include four great-sounding tracks from the February 28, 1988 Worcester, MA show including "Be True," "Roulette," "Walk Like a Man" and "Can't Help Falling in Love." Other poorer-sounding bonus tracks—much poorer, actually—are all cover songs: "Love Me Tender," "Across the Borderline," "Crying" and "Lonely Teardrops." With the exception of the first song from a March 1988 show, these are taken from other May 1988 shows.

Crystal Cat has done wonders with the source tape in mastering this set, and this show has never sounded better. *Bloomington Night*, along with other recent releases, goes a long way towards rectifying the relative inattention given *Tunnel of Love* tour shows. And any

fan of the *Tunnel of Love* tour will doubtless find *Bloomington Night* ranking among their favorites. If you only want one great-sounding *Tunnel of Love* tour set, there's no reason to be cautious about this release.

•This is Not a Dark Ride?

(Doberman, 3CD-R)

Sound Quality: 6

Packaging: 6

Performance: 10

Here's another *Tunnel of Love* tour set, and this one's also a winner—though not an unqualified one. The show itself was impeccable. At the end of the U.S. leg of this tour, Bruce and the band held court for five nights at Madison Square Garden in New York City. Tickets were probably harder to get for these shows than for any other shows during the tour. *This is Not a Dark Ride?* is taken from the second to last show on May 22, 1988.

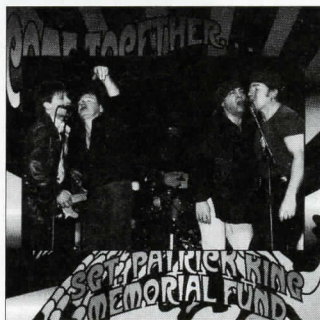
The setlist includes several surprises, including both "Boom Boom" and "Be True" after the "Tunnel of Love" opener, as well as a fine "Vigilante Man" in place of "Roulette" later in the first set. The second set includes a beautiful version of "Across the Borderline" in the spot usually reserved for "Backstreets," and "Born to Be Wild" is included as part of "Light of Day." The encores include rousing versions of "Have Love, Will Travel," "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out," "Sweet Soul Music," "Raise Your Hand" and the first live performance of Jackie Wilson's "Lonely Teardrops."

As for the qualifications, this is certainly not the best sounding title from this tour. The sound is distant and sometimes muddy—especially during the louder parts. The taper fools with the levels a bit around the beginning of the show. But the circulating tapes of this show were never stellar, and the fact that this appears to be taken from a low-generation copy of the analog tape helps a lot.

The performance is the main thing, and this show had performance to spare. Virtually every song is sung and played to perfection, and some reach new heights. But what really makes this show special is the crowd, which is really into this show from the first note on. This crowd acts as if it's a single organism, and their roars of

approval are infectious as hell. When you listen to a tape or CD of a particularly hot performance, it has an amazing way of drawing you into the show until you forget about any sound deficiencies and just listen in awe—wishing like crazy you had been there. This is that type of show.

Doberman is a CD-R only label, and the packaging is minimal, but don't let that dissuade you. It sounds as if Doberman took some extra care in mastering this title, and they've also included six bonus tracks from other *Tunnel of Love* tour shows—including "Crying" from the MSG show on the 16th, and the only live performance of "Cautious Man" from Bloomington. This is definitely one of the best pieces Doberman has released, of a show that's probably been ignored by other labels because of the sound. Though the sound does rate low, you'd be hard-pressed to find a better sounding version of this show—or a better performance from this tour.



•Red Bank Night

(Crystal Cat, 3CD)

Sound Quality: 8

Packaging: 8

Performance: 8

There were people outside the Count Basie Theatre who couldn't buy a ticket for \$1000, but somehow Crystal Cat managed to document the Come Together Benefit with yet another of their excellent live recordings. Don't think of this label as a bootleg imprint; with their tireless devotion to capturing live shows, consider Crystal Cat as documentary-album makers (well, if only they paid royalties). This latest set is perfectly executed: the sound is excellent, the packaging is top-rate, and the show is legendary already.

And that's where the problem may come in. Crystal Cat did a great job capturing what happened at this show, and the three

CDs include every song performed and word spoken. That includes all the songs by Bon Jovi. So as a live recording that you'd want to consider listening to again and again, *Red Bank Night* falls a bit short. "Livin' on a Prayer" is just not a song I want to hear before "Badlands." Ever. And to nit-pick, Bruce's performance is spirited and fun, but these versions of "Badlands" and "Backstreets" don't belong on any live greatest hits disc. Some of this simply is the difference between seeing a concert and listening to a CD: If you were at this event, you'd have loved every part of the show—especially seeing Bruce break out those classics with some of the E Streeters. Yet the actual performance, in my humble opinion, was not mind-blowing. This was not the Christic benefit—or even in the same league—despite the assertions of some who were there.

The real star of this recording, and the highlight of the night, is Southside Johnny, who manages to keep everything rolling and acts as a bridge between Bon Jovi and Bruce. Though it was for a sobering cause, this show was really a party more than anything else—and Southside is great at leading a celebration. "I Played the Fool," which features both Johnny and Little Steven, is a joyous triumph and worth getting this CD for.

For what it's worth, Crystal Cat did a typically fine job on the packaging, reproducing the concert poster, color shots from the show, and more. Newspaper articles relating to the benefit and its beneficiary are reprinted in the booklet, a nice touch. Soundwise, though understandably not up to *Joad* tour standards, this is a very good audience recording—especially considering the rowdy crowd on this night—and the sound noticeably improves midway through the first disc.

I doubt if anyone will ever do a better version of this overall concert, but for my money, I'd take a CD-R with Bon Jovi left on the cutting-room floor. I appreciate Bon Jovi's efforts to help with this benefit, and he did make this concert a celebration of the entire Jersey Shore music scene, yet "Bad Medicine" doesn't go down easy, at least with me. 🐾

CLASSIFIEDS

PERSONALS

JUHA: AUGUST '93, BACKSTREETS #43. 5 YEARS! There ain't nobody, nowhere, nohow... Thanks for being around! Kristina.

STEPHANIE, I JUST WANT TO FEEL YOU IN MY arms and share a little of that human touch, from Mark.

MY BEAUTIFUL REWARD, MARCUS. THANKS Brigitte. Love, Tom.

PONY BOY: CRAYTON SCOTT SABY, BORN JUNE 8, 1998. We've found living proof. Love, Mom and Dad.

MARY, THANK YOU FOR THE MOST BEAUTIFUL gift in the world, our Rosie. P.S. She isn't coming out tonight or any other night until she is 21 (just kidding). Love, Anthony.

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with 10 words or \$10 minimum for all commercial ads, trades, wants, for sales, or tape trades. Ads that have no commercial intent (pen pals, messages and the like) are 50 cents a word, 10 word minimum. No ads selling bootleg or unauthorized materials will be accepted. Write for display advertising rates. *Backstreets* assumes no responsibility for any advertising in the magazine. Please write our Consumer Services Dept. if you have any problems with an advertiser. Send all ads to Classifieds, Backstreets, PO Box 51225, Seattle, WA 98115, fax (206) 728-8827 anytime, or e-mail bossorders@aol.com.

COMPLETE SPRINGSTEEN SET FOR SALE. VINYL and CDs. Contact Martin at (210) 224-2945.

COLLECTOR SELLING 20 YEAR ASSEMBLAGE. Send SASE (2 stamps). Posters, magazines, books, backstage passes, sheet music, LPs, 45s (no CDs or video). Allen Schery, 6 Robinhood, East Islip, NY 11730. (516) 581-0563.

SPRINGSTEEN T-SHIRT. 3/4 LENGTH SLEEVE, Large. slightly worn. Purchased at *Darkness* Tour in 1978. Make trade/offer. Paul, (313) 446-8754.

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SuperFans + SuperService = SuperSub

With membership:

- **First class subscriptions** to all *Backstreets* mailings, including *Backstreets* magazine and all Backstreet Records catalogs and hot sheets. By getting the mag first class you can read it before anyone else, and by getting the catalogs first class you'll get the first shot at rare, one of a kind collectibles.
- **The yearly SuperSub-only Backstreets Staff t-shirt.** A new shirt each year, and each design so far has been a winner. As seen in the front rows of most Bruce shows. Be sure to let us know your t-shirt size when you sign up! We usually have M, L, XL, and XXL available.
- **A free classified ad in each issue.** Up to 20 words—an \$80 value if you're taking advantage of this every time out.
- **SuperSub Hotline.** The unlisted SuperSub-only number gives you much easier access to the *Backstreets* Boss hotline, where you'll hear all the breaking news first.
- **Other stuff** includes the yearly *Backstreets* Holiday Greeting Cards. The SuperSub is \$50 a year, but the first class service is worth its weight in gold when you need to know *now*. And for airmail service, in addition to the other perks listed above, **SuperSubs are now available to overseas fans for the same price.** For more information on the SuperSub, call Backstreets at (206) 728-7603. Or send check or money order to: SuperSubs, PO Box 51225, Seattle, WA 98115, e-mail: bossorders@aol.com, FAX (206) 728-8827.

If you're a super fan of Bruce Springsteen, you'll want to check out the *Backstreets* SuperSub, a membership program that includes added services.

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Now an annual event, the latest auction from Backstreet Records is happening this summer.

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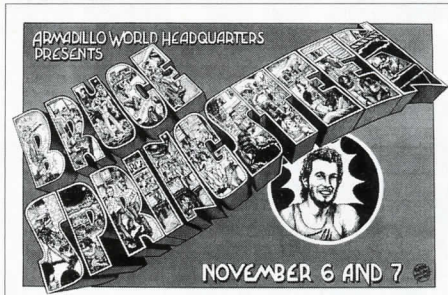
The new issue also includes our warehouse sale, listing our full inventory of Boss items for set sale, including all CDs, records, posters, backstage passes, books and magazines in stock. To receive catalogs regularly, subscribe to the Backstreet Records catalog for \$5 (\$8 overseas) for the next 5 issues. Or send \$1 for the auction listing.

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Look for the auction listing online in July at www.backstreets.com

COLLECT THE BOSS! BACKSTREET RECORDS www.backstreets.com

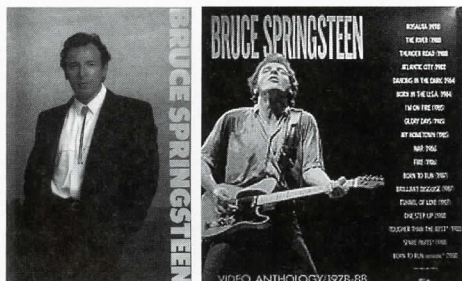
POSTERS



•**ARMADILLO WORLD HEADQUARTERS, NOVEMBER 6-7, 1974** Classic illustrated poster from Austin shows, printed in red and black on heavier stock. This is the original, in fantastic condition—near-mint—and perfect for framing. 17 x 11.....\$200

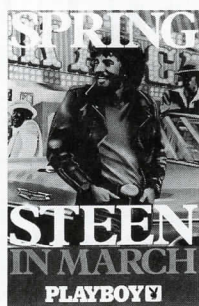


•**"FINALLY" POSTER: UK BORN TO RUN PROMO** One of the most legendary Springsteen posters—as torn down in London by Bruce—at long last makes it to the collectors' market, 22 years later. A well-placed source in the UK was able to stash a few of these posters away, saving them from the wheatpaste brush and the wrath of the Boss. This is the original, very clean and in amazing shape especially considering its age. Black on nice matte stock. Slight wear at the very edges perhaps, but vg+ overall. More than any other poster, a true piece of Springsteen history. Limited. 40 x 30.....\$400



•**TUNNEL OF LOVE "BEACH SHOT" POSTER** Commercial poster with beautiful outtake photo from the Tunnel sessions. Bruce against deep blue sky seen in Tunnel tourbook, mint.....\$20

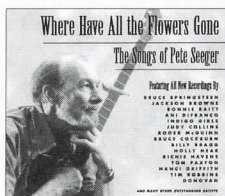
•**VIDEO ANTHOLOGY PROMOTIONAL POSTER** Gorgeous large poster issued to video stores in conjunction with the video's release, with cover shot and song titles (promo mobile also available, call for more info).....\$20



•**1976 PLAYBOY POSTER** One of the greatest and rarest Springsteen posters, a promotional poster issued by Playboy (with Columbia approval) to promote their feature and interview with Bruce in the March 1976 issue. Brilliant colors, and in amazing condition, m.....\$100

•**WILD & INNOCENT PROMO POSTER** The cover of the second album inset on a larger cream-colored sheet. Great for framing, and in great condition for its age: vg+ or better.....\$50

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•**WHERE HAVE ALL THE FLOWERS GONE: A TRIBUTE TO PETE SEEGER** Bruce's most recent release, a beautiful rendition of Seeger's "We Shall Overcome." This double CD includes 38 other tracks as well.....\$30

•**NO NUKES** A 2CD set with all the music from the original 3 LPs, including Springsteen's "Devil with the Blue Dress Medley" and his duet with Jackson Browne on "Stay." Finally on CD!.....\$30

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•**ONE STEP UP/TWO STEPS BACK** A tribute to the Boss, two CDs featuring 28 Bruce covers.....\$22

•**EURO "DEAD MAN WALKIN'" CD5** Studio versions of Dead Man and Hwy 29, plus two more live tracks from the Columbia Radio Hour broadcast: This Hard Land and Does This Bus Stop. Plus a great picture sleeve.....\$14

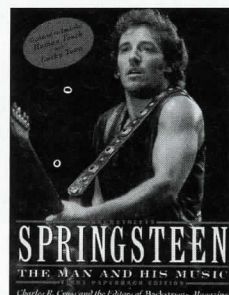
TOUR ITEMS



•**DARKNESS BACKSTAGE PASS** An original pass from 1978—a special find, and at a lower price than you'll see again. The guaranteed original, in perfect shape with backing still on. Brown image on white, don't miss this one.....\$10

•**UNUSED BRUCE TICKET** An original, untorn printed ticket from the 5/4/76 reserved seating show at the Mississippi Coliseum.....\$10

BOOKS, MAGS & MORE



BACKSTREETS Springsteen: The Man and His Music By Charles R. Cross and the editors of *Backstreets Magazine*. The "Bruce bible"—with interviews, history, studio sessions, a tour chronology with setlists and more. 1992 paperback edition, revised and updated with new photos and material.....\$19

BACKSTREETS Springsteen: The Man and His Music 1989 Hardback, with photos and material not included in the paperback, SALE PRICE.....\$15



WANTED MAGAZINE #1 The debut issue of a new magazine dedicated to reviewing Bruce bootlegs and nothing else! Published in Holland, written in English by Jan Rodenrijs, provides ratings, comments, and cover art. A great supplement to the *You Better Not Touch* guides (see page 2).

To be published three times a year.....\$10

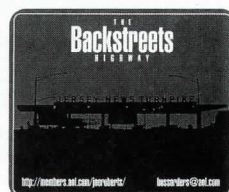
WANTED MAGAZINE #2 New issue!.....\$10

THE TIES THAT BIND The Bruce mag from our friends at Badlands, a smaller version of *FTRO* that appears more often. #1, #2, #3, #6, #7 and new double issue #8/9 are now available.....\$4 each, \$8 for double issues

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•BACKSTREETS

MOUSEPAD Showing the Jersey News Turnpike from the *Backstreets* website, printed in three colors—red, white and black—on an 8 1/2" x 7" hard-top pad. Sharp!.....\$8



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Canadian Customers, add \$3 to U.S. shipping. **Overseas Customers**, specify AIR or SURFACE. Provide credit card info for fastest service: we'll add appropriate shipping and ship right away.

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If ordering posters in addition to other items, ADD \$4.00 to regular shipping to cover additional mailing costs. **UPS Second Day Air** ADD \$8.00 to regular shipping.

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Don't miss an issue of BACKSTREETS

as the countdown continues!

Stay tuned for more installments of "25 Years of Recorded History" in the next issues of *Backstreets*—with 1979-1998 still to come as we build up to Springsteen's induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame!

1973	1982	1991
1974	1983	1992
1975	1984	1993
1976	1985	1994
1977	1986	1995
1978	1987	1996
1979	1988	1997
1980	1989	1998
1981	1990	

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SUMMER 1998

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Continued from page 5

my parents shouting next door, and the only thing I could do is play the *Nebraska* CD over and over, until I cried myself to sleep. I listened to the songs and somehow felt a connection between the songs and me, listening to the words and the power in Bruce's voice.

After this, I started having problems of my own; I changed my character (and still do—I'm working on it) as one changes socks, and I didn't trust anyone. I used to be with my friends somewhere, but my mind was always traveling, with Bruce.

One morning, I woke up as on any other day and listened to a song that made me look my life from another point of view. I had listened to "Wreck on the Highway" a million times, but somehow, that morning I got a message, and from then on, I started to appreciate what I had instead of what I didn't. After all, you only live once, and you never know what may happen to you. I am not surprised that Bruce's words and character have helped more than one person in life. I want to thank Bruce, for changing my life and giving me hope. I hope I get to see him sometime—I've never been able to—and thank him personally.

Lucia Folle
 Montevideo, Uruguay

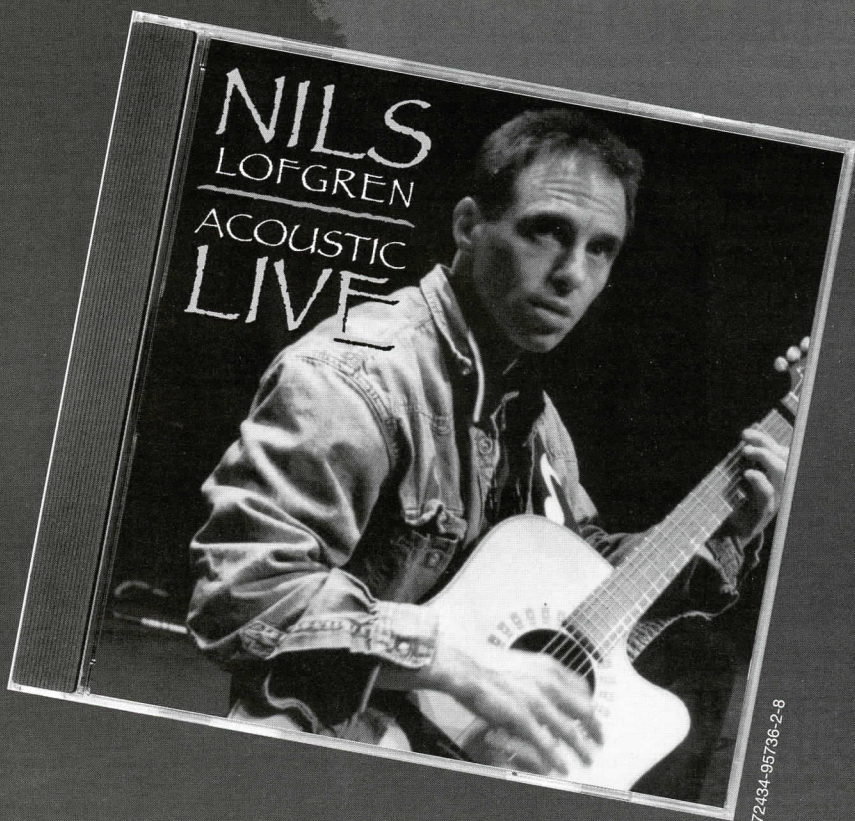
CORRECTION: Due to a printing error on page 26 in *Backstreets* #58, George Theiss' story in "25 Years of Recorded History: Part One" was cut off. The complete text follows.

George Theiss, frontman of Bruce's first band, the Castiles:

"In 1973 Bruce and I were on the beach in Long Branch with my wife and son, who was only two at the time. Bruce picked up my son and brought him down to the water. This big wave comes barrelling in, and Bruce turns around and runs back onto the shore just as the wave breaks and gets my son. My son wiped out! I'll never forget that."

All "Shore Memories" interviews were conducted by Robert Makin.

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